

139

From America Park to King's Lynne:  
A Community in Transition

by

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'FROM AMERICA PARK TO KING'S LYNNE: A COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the America Park public housing development in the city of Lynn, Massachusetts and the problems common to state aided public housing developments. It also examines the unique solution that was formulated to address the development; that is the transformation of a public housing project to a mixed income development. This is a case study of the planning process at work from definition of the problem to the implementation of a designed solution.

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## INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to examine how a public housing development, America Park, considered to be the worst in the state, became the basis of a pilot program in mixed income housing. This then is a case study in social innovation: innovation in the sense that new institutional arrangements had to be created and untraditional alliances formed to make the concept work in practice. In another sense it is a case study of the planning process which moves in practice along the theoretical spectrum from problem formulation to program design to implementation. Chapter one reviews briefly the history of Lynn, the city in which America Park was located. An understanding of the characteristics of the city helps reveal how it was possible for the project to reach the end of physical, social and economic viability. Further, the nature of the problem of America Park is set in its Lynn context. Chapter two addresses the process by which a solution was formulated to address the problems of America Park and why the solution took the form it did. In chapter three the problems of legitimizing the program design will be examined as well as how the America Park Fact Finding Committee, (APFFC), established to develop the solution, handled the political confrontation. Chapter four will look at the period of transition; when the Lynn Housing Authority (LHA), released their control of America Park and the new private developers took over. It will also examine who the designed model was implemented and how it had not accounted for a number of occurrences. It will examine these occurrences to determine the impact that they had on the program design. Finally, in chapter five there will be a review of what is termed "phase one" of the project. That is, the new

development will have opened and housed the first group of America Park tenants and market tenants. As the thesis unfolds it will become obvious that no attempt is being made to evaluate the success or failure of the social experiment as a whole. It is impossible to perform such an evaluation at this time because of the youth of the experiment. However, it is possible to note that in some regards the experiment did work and in other respects it did not. It is the intent of this thesis to record the successes and failures of the program, to note the ways that this social experiment worked as well as the ways it did not.

Before going on it is necessary to note that the basis for this thesis rests upon participant observation done on the site for nine months. This case study reveals information obtained from tenants, tenant representatives, management, social services and outside agencies. Judgements made regarding the success or failure of any particular portion of the experiment comes directly from the data gained while on-site.

## CHAPTER ONE

### AMERICA PARK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CITY OF LYNN

Lynn, like many Massachusetts cities, has a long history. Located on the eastern section of the state on the northern shore of Massachusetts Bay, Lynn is 11 miles outside of Boston. Originally, in 1630, when settlers moved from Salem to the Lynn area it was referred to as Saugust. With the arrival of the town's first minister from King's Lynn England, the settlers changed the name of the community to Lynn in his honor.

The city grew at a rapid pace after its incorporation and became known as a community for working class people. Economically, the city was one of the soundest in the state. Manufacturing was a prime industry in Lynn and offered employment opportunities to its citizenry. For years the city was the shoe center of the world. Competition from European shoe manufacturers has forced the closing of most Lynn factories in the last 25 years. Since that time the city has been heavily dependent on the General Electric Company for economic stability. However, General Electric could not replace all the employment options the city lost with the fall of the shoe manufacturing trade. Thus, there has been a steady decline in the population since the loss of manufacturing.

In 1950 the city recorded its largest number of citizens of 99,738 while in 1970 there remained 90,294 persons.<sup>1</sup> The population is racially and ethnically mixed as 65.5% of the residents are foreign born with their mother tongue being non-English. This population is predominately Hispanic, Japanese or Chinese. Some 3% of the population is Black.

Of those residents 16 years of age or older most are employed and work in the civilian labor market. Employment patterns of residents slightly shifted from working class to white collar workers. White collar workers made up 46.4% of the population, 37.1% were in manufacturing and 13.1% were in non-civilian related work. The median income in Lynn is recorded at \$9,739. Only 18% of the population have income of \$15,000 or more as compared to 30.1% in metropolitan Boston. Some 23.2% of the residents have yearly incomes under \$6,000 while the metropolitan Boston area recorded only 16.9% of its population earning under \$6,000.

In 1961, political officials expressed concern over the future development of the city. Lynn had the serious problems of a declining tax base and population along with the fact that most land had already been developed. Key words used to express the character of the city were blight and deterioration. City officials, in attempting to revitalize the city, established a long range master plan to "improve the physical character and environment of certain key areas of the city."<sup>2</sup> Recognizing the need for aesthetic improvements in the city and outlining a plan to bring these changes about could, it was believed, do much to improve Lynn's environment. Yet when plans were designed they included only the central business district, the government center area, a few specific parcels of land within the city and the main entrances to Lynn. Planning officials neglected to give much attention to most of the aging private housing stock or to the public housing stock in the plan. Officials hoped that private owners would perform their own improvements with the encouragement of anticipated national and local programs. The public stock, although managed by the city, was considered the responsibility of the state and federal agencies which constructed them.

It seemed unusual that the master plan would give no attention to public housing considering that 23.2% of the population in the city had incomes below \$6,000. Further, the plan specifically stated that public housing should be used when necessary to relocate those displaced by city efforts. Yet no city attention was given to revitalization of public units.

In 1970, state and federal agencies did allocate funding for modernization of the units in Lynn. However, those funds could not rehabilitate all developments nor could they scratch the surface of the social difficulties confronting the developments in Lynn. This was true in particular, of the America Park development. The project had fallen to a condition where

local and state officials, along with tenants, felt that it was no longer feasible to allocate funds for corrective actions. Not only was it considered the worst in the state but also one of the worst developments in the country. In 1973, House Majority Leader Thomas W. McGee, D-Lynn, stated that America Park was a "cancerous blight" and that the state could not be expected to continue funding a project with the magnitude of problems America Park had. McGee's opinion was highly valued as he was the actor who was responsible for obtaining over \$1 million dollars in renovation funds for Lynn Housing Authority properties. However, in the present case, McGee said that the Commonwealth would "not send good money after bad."<sup>3</sup>

There were however, a large number of people who considered America Park, no matter what the condition, home. There was a large debt that had to be paid whether or not America Park remained open or was closed. Many felt that the best option was to relocate all the families residing in the development and demolish it as it no longer provided decent and safe housing. Yet, relocation of the families would cause other problems that the city could not cope with. Foremost among them was a lack of low and moderate income housing to replace those units that would be lost by closing America Park. It was also felt that America Park tenants could not move into the Lynn community due to the stigma that had been attached to them for residing in the project.

After many years of throwing the problem of America Park around in state and local housing offices, a group of professionals along with tenants of the development designed the social experiment in mixed income housing on which this paper is based. The "problem" of America Park underwent a searching examination in an effort to "do something" about it. What that something was and how it was formulated and put into operation is the focus of this case study.



THE "PROBLEM" OF AMERICA PARK

America Park was the largest development in Lynn managed by the Lynn Housing Authority. Built in 1948 by the state as a Chapter 200 project to house returning veterans, the development contained 408 total units situated on 58 acres of land on the western side of the city. (See Map 1 in Appendix) Building structures consisted primarily of two story buildings with four to six units per building although the development did have two three story buildings. Construction of the two story buildings was brick on the first floor with a stucco finish applied to the second story. The three story buildings were completely brick walk up structures.

Layout of the development was scattered across the 58 acres allowing for a large amount of open space. Two major roads through America Park and a rock ledge divided the development physically into an upper and lower section. The lower section of the development had poor drainage while the upper section had rock ledges gutting throughout this section. To the north and east of the development were residential neighborhoods which ran directly into America Park. To the west was a privately owned dump which over the years caused various problems within the development. Located to the south is the Curwin Circle housing development, the second largest project managed by the LHA. Adjacent to Curwin Circle was a large parcel of marshy land owned by the city and known as the Pike Land.

Unlike the traditional image of public housing developments, the units of America Park were constructed to allow the tenant to feel as though he/she were in private housing. Each unit had both private front and rear entrances. Areas in back of units served as individual backyards opening into the common community open space.

Over the years the original tenants of America Park moved and were replaced with new tenants. Moderate and low income families in the Lynn area in search of affordable shelter were placed in the vacant apartments. Before long the entire development was changed from veteran housing to housing for lower income families.

The transformation of America Park began at a time when the development was in need of repairs. Over the years the New England weather wore away the exterior stucco leaving the undercoating exposed. Window and door frames rotted with age allowing the elements to enter units. Roofs were a constant form of problems for tenants. Rooftops became a play area for project children. An unusual amount of debris collected upon them; and tenants attached television antennae onto roofing material causing the problem with roofs to become more severe. At one point so much trash had accumulated on the roofs and in the chimneys that the flues were blocked for four units. Residents from these units were rushed to Saugus General Hospital where doctors found that they suffered from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Tenants residing in units with bad leaking problems were relocated to other apartments in the development. Funding to repair the roofs was unavailable. The LHA found it to be a costly expenditure to keep the buildings functioning without full occupancy. The residents remaining were therefore moved to vacant units to allow the closing of the structures. The housing

authority hoped that funding would become available at a later time to re-open the units. However, the units were vandalized and soon beyond repair. Boards were placed on windows and doors. Yet more often than not they were removed; and the units were used as play areas by children. These units, plus several in the three story buildings which were never occupied due to construction mistakes, began to give America Park the appearance of a declining public housing development.

When America Park was constructed the heating system for the 408 units was maintained by three boiler plants. After years of use the LHA decided to replace them with gas furnaces located in the basements of each building. Although it seemed a sound decision at the time, it was later regretted by the housing authority and tenants alike. Because of drainage problems at the bottom of the hill, structures accumulated large amounts of water in the basements, automatically triggering the furnaces to shut down. Tenants often complained of not having either heat or hot water for weeks at a time. It seemed to many that there either was too much heat or none at all during the winters in America Park. The housing authority acknowledges that this was true but held that because of the state of the overall physical plant, repairs were always backlogged.

While the physical plant continued to deteriorate, the financially able continued to leave the America Park development. In addition, many residents on fixed incomes dependent on public housing requested the authority for transfers to other developments. When possible most persons were granted their requests. The turnover rate of America Park increased and thus the associated problems of physical deterioration and a transient community occurred. During this period the development became even worse in the judgment of those tenants who remained.

"This was a bad place to live, a real hell hole. I used to get up everyday and wonder what was gonna happen to-day, wonder if it was gonna be me or my kids that it happend to."

Without the funds for extensive repairs, there was little that could slow the decline of the development. Because of the proximity of the dump to America Park, rodents became a serious problem at the bottom of the hill. Cockroaches, as in many public housing developments, became roommates with the residents. Pets, although not allowed by the standards of the LHA's leases, roamed freely throughout the project. Tenants were known to own animals, in fact many residents owned more than one pet. There were extreme cases. One resident kept doberman pinchers tied outside his door. Several children were attacked by these dogs. Another resident owned a mountain lion which became a source of problems. The number of animals at America Park increased drastically when one considered the number of stray dogs and cats on-site. Stray dogs were a serious problem they roamed around the development in packs and often turned on residents. Wild cats tended to make homes for themselves in the basements of buildings keeping tenants awake nights with their noises.

The range of social problems accompanying physical problems at America Park were just as serious. To residents of the city of Lynn, America Park was a mistake that was better forgotten. A low image was held publically of the development and its residents. Opinions from the broader society greatly effected the lives of residents. Residents were looked down upon not only for living in public housing development, but also for living in the America Park development. Tenants were considered second class citizens by the Lynn population and even began to believe that they in fact were. America Park residents received credit privileges from only one store in the city, Skip's

Superette located near the project. Beneath the strong character of many residents, there was a sense of shame for living in America Park. Yet this shame only surfaced when residents left the boundaries of the project. Interviews with America Park tenants revealed how they felt about living in America Park. One tenant, a mother with two children revealed the following:

When I first decided to move to America Park in 1969 my friends and family tried to convince me not to. They thought something terrible would happen to us. They even said if we did move in they would never visit us. But what could I do. I already lived in a bad place. This was the only place the housing authority could send me. So we came. You know what's funny, after we moved here I felt safer here with my kids than where we used to live. People on the outside don't know what its like to live here. Sure, I was scared sometime. But that was mostly because of that gang that lived next door. Let me tell you something and don't you ever tell anybody I told you. I'm on welfare you know. Have been since my husband left me. Anyway, I had a little job in an office. I rode the bus to work but one day one of the other girls said she would give me a lift home. I didn't want her to cause nobody knew I lived in America Park. She insisted so I said okay. I had her drive me over to Holyoke Street, you see I told people at work I lived there. All the way home she kept talking about America Park and those trashy people who lived there. She wanted to know if I wasn't scared that those people might break in and rape me or my kids. I told her I was. You know I can still hear her today, talking about us trashy people.

Adults were not alone in this feeling of shame about their homes. A large majority of the residents attended a nearby local catholic church. For Sunday School Services the church sent a bus to pick up children. Youth from America Park would walk three blocks away from the development into a residential section to be picked up. This was not because they were forced to, but

because they did not want anyone to know where they lived.

In talking with mothers from the development, many recalled that their children never had friends from outside America Park visit their homes unless they were from Curwin Circle. Even visits from people residing in Curwin Circle were rare. There seemed to be a sense on the part of these residents that they were better than persons from America Park.

The negative perception of America Park on the part of outsiders and often insiders alike was understandable. The physical appearance of the project or the fact that it was a low income development alone did not instill these feelings. It took the total environment to give the development this perception. For years America Park was known as a crime ridden community. One of the city's largest drug operations ran openly in the development until pressure from federal officials in 1966 slowed down the drug traffic. Disputes between residents were common and often ended in violence. One such occurrence ended in two male neighbors shooting at one another until one was severely wounded.

Youth were not exempt from physical violence in the community. In fact, many disturbances between adults resulted from an episode that occurred due to or between children. One tenant recalled the following incident:

My boy was out back playing and he knocked over the neighbors sheet. It was an accident though and he picked it up. I heard all this noise so I looked out and saw all these people around my kid. I went out to see what was going on and the woman came running at me with this sheet. Before I knew what happened this lady was all over me. Somebody gave her a 2x4 and she let me have it. She broke my arm and beat me pretty good. Somebody called the cops, they came and broke it up. You know what they told me to do, move!

This same lady explained fighting among residents as being acceptable. "We poor people get frustrated when we don't have money. We can't get to the man so we take it out on each other." Whatever the reason for violence among tenants it became an acceptable portion of life in America Park.

Tenant turnover continued as many households gave up quickly on America Park. Around 1968, the Lynn Housing Authority began to accept applications from various metropolitan housing authorities to fill vacancies in America Park. Tenants, as well as some housing authority personnel, nicknamed the development "the state dumping ground." However, the Lynn Housing Authority had very little choice. More and more units were becoming vacant and there was no demand for the development within the city. Lessons of the past showed the authority that if units remained vacant in the development, they would be vandalized beyond repair. Visually, America Park was public housing of the worst sort. Cars parked on yards, trash overflowing and boarded up units were a common sight. By opting to fill units with non-Lynn residents the LHA was attempting to slow down the decline of the project. It was a difficult decision to make on the part of the authority for those persons referred to Lynn were usually families rejected for various reasons by their own housing authorities. Yet, it was an attempt to keep America Park alive.

Time has shown that the admittance of persons from other areas did not help America Park. Rather, most of the families created more difficulties for the already problem ridden community. Many problems were the result of the developments lack of security. Breaking and entering became a regular occurrence. Many families invested in anti-burglary devices such as alarms, window grills, extra door chains and dogs. Personal assaults rose in number. Most residents from the top and bottom of the hill would not walk through

wooded areas of America Park during the day or evening. Petty theft was a major issue not only within the boundaries of America Park but also outside of the development. The drug traffic again increased at a pace that not only alarmed residents but also Lynn Police.

By 1970, America Park had become a jigsaw puzzle of various problematic pieces. Some 300 units were occupied on a continuing basis with the remaining units vacant. Many units had been ransacked to the point where only the physical frame of the building remained. The tenant population had, by this time changed dramatically. Most tenants were white although there was an increasing number of Black and Hispanic families moving in. When moving into the development these families were categorized by the LHA as either stable or unstable tenants. Of those persons residing at the bottom of the hill, most had low levels of education. All Hispanic families and those Black families originating from the south or those with lower levels of income, were given units at the bottom. There were white families scattered through the area who had the same characteristics. Those persons who had been categorized as problem tenants also resided at the bottom of the hill but tended to live on the side towards Osborn Street. (See Map 2 in Appendix) Families that were considered good tenants or who had higher levels of education and or incomes, lived at the top of the hill.

This division of tenants by the LHA lasted the life of America Park. Tenants who had lived at the top of the hill recalled that they never drove into America Park through the front entrance. That would have forced them to drive through the bottom of the hill. Instead they used a rear entrance that went directly into the top section.

Throughout the development there were a large number of female headed



households. Approximately 170 households were female headed and the average family size was 5 persons. Over half of the persons residing in the development were under the age of 17. The LHA found that the development was not capable of handling the needs of the population. Most units were overcrowded due to the mismatch between family sizes and units that were vacant and habitable.

While the physical location of the development had not initially been a major problem it became one for the new residents. Tenants felt completely cut off from the world when entering America Park. There had never been any professional buildings which could house various health services located near the development. The area lacked other public services such as laundry facilities, chain grocery stores, recreation facilities, pharmacies, etc. Public transportation, which many persons were dependent upon, tended to be extremely irregular. Many tenants were totally at the mercy of the MBTA to get at essential services.

Because of the character of events at America Park, the development seemed to continually surface in the local Daily Evening Item. Whether the newspaper was reporting on police activities, or other frequent events such as fires or social problems, America Park always had a newsworthy item.

By 1971 everyone knew that something had to be done about America Park. The members of the Lynn Housing Authority (LHA) realized that the project could not continue in its current state. Not only did the development have physical and social problems but the LHA was faced with economic problems due to the difference between collected rents and operating expenses. Tenants of America Park had complained about the quality of their living condition for some time. Residents had no specific ideas about what exactly

could or should be done to correct all the developments problems, yet they knew that something drastic was needed.

Elected city officials all wanted the problem of America Park corrected however, there were numerous thoughts on how it should be handled. Most officials felt that the development had outlived its life and should be demolished as Pruitt Igo was. Others seemed to feel that America Park would take care of itself. Most politicians could afford to take this attitude as almost all of the resident of the development were not registered voters and therefore constituted no political threat.

#### MOBOLIZING TO DEAL WITH AMERICA PARK

In early 1972 State Senator James Carrigan, D-Lynn, concluded that America Park needed major attention. Approaching Housing Opportunities, Inc., (HOI), a non-profit housing group based in Lynn, Carrigan requested HOI to undertake a study to determine the scope of America Park problems and various methods for solution. HOI accepted the assignment. However, they turned to Greater Boston Community Development, Inc., (GBCD), a non-profit housing consultant with whom HOI had previously worked.

GBCD saw the assignment as an opportunity to become involved in formulating plausible alternatives for troubled state aided developments and accepted the HOI request.

During the months of April and May of 1972, GB CD met with numerous groups involved with low income housing in Lynn. These months were used by employees of GB CD as information sessions. Economic, physical and social data available on America Park was compiled. Meetings were held with HOI, Lynn Housing Authority officials and city and state officials to gain a complete understanding of the history of the development. Contact was made with the remaining state legislators concerned with the issue. By the end of

May GBCD had met with every person involved with America Park with the exception of those most directly effected by the study: the America Park tenants. A meeting was then held with the tenants to brief them on the evolving study and to request their cooperation and assistance. Two female tenants were elected to represent residents during the study, Mrs. Susan Wooldridge and Mrs. Ronnie Griffith.

Realizing that every actor involved in America Park had been contacted, GBCD established the America Park Fact Finding Committee, (APFFC), made up of representatives from key agencies. The group took on the task of sifting through the problems of the state aided development and proposing changes that would once and for all "do something" about America Park.

## Chapter 2

### FORMULATION OF A SOLUTION

The APFFC was composed of an impressive set of actors. As previously mentioned, Mrs. Susan Wooldridge and Mrs. Ronnie Griffith represented the tenants of America Park. Personnel from the city of Lynn included Mr. Hans Bleiker, Planning Director and Mr. Fred Bowler, Director of the Lynn Housing Authority. State officials on the committee were Mr. Thomas McGee, State Representative, Mr. James Smith, State Representative and Mr. James Carrigan, the legislator who initiated the study. Ms. Tee Taggart, Administrative Assistant to Senator Carrigan also sat on the committee. Although HOI was not taking the prime responsibility for the work they did have members participating in the study, Ms. Ruth Fried, Mr. Vin McManus and Ms. Clarice Hewman. GBCD, was represented by Mr. Bob Luersen and Mr. Langley Keyes. In this chapter we will examine how this group of actors determined that a mixed income development was the design solution to the problems of America Park.

### APFFC INVESTIGATIONS

Official meetings of the Fact Finding Committee began in June of 1972. Although each member of the committee came to the group with varying viewpoints and knowledge on America Park, there was among the group general agreement that the development was in need of drastic changes. Options open to the committee for corrective actions ranged from complete or partial rehabilitation to a phasing out of America Park.

After reviewing exactly what the problems of America Park were, the APFFC decided that any alternative to the development must contain certain considerations. First and foremost, no one wanted to create another America Park. Therefore, committee members stated that any plan for the development should have some mechanism to allow for the formation of a sound social and

economic community. Plans should be formulated with the tenants in mind, that is, there had to be an alternative to the present housing program that would not force any of the present tenants to relocate outside of the project.

Plans for change should have a supportive system built in to allow for social change.

Rehabilitation of the development, whether partial or complete, had both advantages and disadvantages. Given the physical condition of the plant, partial rehabilitation would only give the development a facelift. In no way could it create the social and economic considerations sought for the new community.

Due to the social reputation of America Park, as well as the high costs involved, it seemed improbably to believe that interest could be stimulated with any private agency or developer. Thus, such a venture would have to be carried out by the LHA. Economically, the authority was not in a position to consider performing the rehabilitation of America Park. Further, partial rehabilitation might offer the short term immediate answer but it did not address the future of the development. There would be improved housing for the tenants but there would not be any changes in the social environment of the community. As partial rehabilitation necessitated that America Park remain public housing there would still be a stigma around the development that could hinder achieving full occupancy. Committee members had no assurances that another America Park would not develop within 5 to 10 years after the rehabilitation. Therefore, it was felt that there was no way that partial rehabilitation could be justified.

Total rehabilitation seemed to address the goals the committee outlined moreso than partial rehabilitation. This method of rehabilitation could be

undertaken by either the Lynn Housing Authority with the assistance of federal agencies or a private developer. However, as in the case of partial rehabilitation, committee members felt that if performed, total rehabilitation should be carried out by an outside organization in hope that it would elivate the stigma of America Park. Further, by opting for an outside developer, the committee belived that the goals of developing and economical and socially sound community might be attained.

The physical character of America Park would change little under rehabilitation. The size and location of the structures would be given and a developer would have to consider how best to rebuild the image of the development. Much would have to be done to assure that none of the negative characteristics of America Park remained and that the new community would eventually become self sufficient.

In order to gain the interest of an outside developer the rehabilitation package would have to be extremely tempting. The site and location worked in favor of the committee however, it did not balance the fact that the new community would have to first house public housing tenants. Most developers would overlook the advantages of site, location and on-site infrastructure for fear that any units remaining for occupancy would not be rented once people found out that they would be residing with low income residents.

The costs involved in preforming such a project would be extremely high. Furthermore, there were non-monetary costs that had to be considered by committee members. Residents of the development expressed to the group in no uncertain terms that they wanted nothing to do with fixing what they already had. They voiced their opinion and did so strongly, they wanted to get rid of America Park entirely. The committee had very little choice other than to abandon the consideration of total rehabilitation.

Replacing the America Park project with a new development presented the APFFC with several possibilities. The only real one avenue that was given serious consideration by committee members was the development of a new town on the site. Constructing a new town would definitely meet all the stated goals of the committee. New units would be provided, support systems for tenants could be a portion of the development, economic stability could be achieved with a social mixture of tenants and the state modernization program could be incorporated into the package allowing for extra funding. Furthermore, the new town could be handled by a private developer negating the public housing and in particular, the America Park characteristics.

The erection of a new town did have drawbacks that had to be considered by the committee. Among these were the facts that new town had not been successful in this country. New towns tended to be on the immediate fringe of the metropolitan community, the America Park site not only was inside of a suburb but also is 11 miles outside of Boston. Construction of a new town within a city that was itself experiencing economic difficulties and a decreasing population would be a risk.

While the Department of Housing and Urban Development at one time had abundant funding for new town construction such was no longer the case. No other agency could offer the amount of financial backing that would be needed to construct a new town on the site. For all of these reasons, committee members felt that they should continue to seek other alternatives to the problem of America Park.

Yet, creating a new community was by far more compatible with the APFFC goals than rehabilitation of the existing development. Since it appeared that a new town was not exactly what was desired, committee members moved on to the option of constructing a new development. Building a new development that

would not be public housing fit all goals of the committee. By demolishing America Park and starting afresh there was the opportunity for the creation of a community that would allow for tenant assimilation into the larger surrounding community. Facilities that were found lacking in the America Park project could be included in plans for the new development.

One of the most striking features of the option for a new development was the possibility of securing financing from the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, (MHFA). Although MHFA had never been involved in anything of this sort, the purpose of the agency matched the goals the committee had established for the redevelopment of America Park. MHFA sought to develop housing that would have both racial and income mixtures. Requirements of the agency state that 25% of any units rented must be rented to low income persons. MHFA also required that developments have a racial balance. Tenants of the America Park project could fill both the income and race requirements. Remaining units could be marketed to moderate and middle income persons allowing for an economic and social mixture of tenants.

The MHFA concept would allow for construction of the support services required by committee members. Other MHFA projects had housed low income persons and the agency was therefore aware of the difficulties that could arise for such tenants.

As the APFFC had found what was believed to be a development strategy, attention shifted from seeking an approach to developing a plan for action. The plan of constructing a new development might have solved one set of problems for the group but at the same time it created another. Never before in the history of public housing had anything such as this been proposed. There was no background for the group to examine, no foundation from which they could work. How would they dispose of the housing development? What



would happen to the tenants? How would they interest a developer in taking on the task? Who would control the development while construction was going on? Resolving these issues became the central task of the APFFC as it worked its way towards a viable program design.

#### APFFC ATTEMPTS AT PROGRAM DESIGN

The only time a state-aided public housing development had been sold in Massachusetts was when the Department of Community Affairs, (DEA), according to the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 121B Section 34, determined that there was no longer a need for such housing. It was a known fact that there was a demand for low income housing in Lynn. Thus, the committee would have to prove that for every unit of low income housing they demolished one would be constructed to replace it.

Under the Massachusetts law, after DCA's agreement, any public housing project could not be sold for less than the outstanding debt of the local housing authority. The market value for America Park was estimated at 2 million dollars. Investigations by committee members revealed that as of January 1973, the development would have a debt of \$4,684.00.

Committee members realized that if they found no method to address decreasing the price of selling America Park all efforts to sell the development would be futile. It was felt that if the committee could secure a write down on the debt on America Park the project could be sold. Obtaining a write down could be handled in one of two manners. The urban renewal program allowed for such occurrences however, any attempt to institute any renewal programs in Lynn would be halted before they could start. The city council proved to be extremely anti-urban renewal after Lynn's experiences with the federal renewal program.

There was a possibility of receiving a state appropriation to write

down the sale price of the development. Approaching the legislation in hope of securing a state appropriation could put the whole plan for redevelopment in jeopardy. Many legislators might have felt that there would only be benefits to the city of Lynn and wonder what benefits they would ever receive for their own city. However, committee members felt that a defense could be constructed around the fact that America Park had been used as a regional public housing development. Further, it was felt that in the long run it would prove to be much more sound investment than the existing Chapter 200 development.

Discussions around relocation proved to be relatively simple. Because of the size and physical lay out of the site it was feasible to have phased relocation with a program of phase construction. Buildings without full occupancy could be closed with tenants relocated to other sections of the development to allow for demolishing empty structures. As various sections were cleared construction could start. When units were finished tenants could be relocated again into the new structures. In order to preform such relocation, committee members felt that the LHA would have to agree not to place any new families in the project beyond an established date. Further, considering the conditions that tenants had been living under and those they would have to live under during construction it was felt that a moratorium should be instituted for tenant rents.

The question arose as to who should be responsible for the relocation procedures: the LHA or some other personnel. After considering the pros and cons of both alternatives the APFFC felt that relocation should be undertaken by an outside group approved by MHFA and the committee.

Figuring the present number of on-site families any new development would have to house 350 America Park families. Based on the MHFA requirements

of having 1/3 of the units constructed for low income residents, 1/3 for moderate and 1/3 for middle income tenants, a new development could theoretically have 1000 units, allowing for a significant profit for a developer.

There were other elements that could be to the advantage of the committee when attempting to stimulate interest from developers. All infrastructure from the America Park development could be used in a new development saving a developer a good deal of money. An MHFA development would not disclose which tenants were low, moderate or middle income thus averting possible problems marketing. The benefits of MHFA financing along with the possibility of a state appropriation all made the America Park redevelopment a tempting package.

If the mixed income development were to be implemented Committee members believed that there would be a need for a protective device for America Park tenants that would insure that they would not be lost in the process. This program had been designed for the America Park tenants and their needs, not for those who could afford to move into any luxury development. This program was designed to be a mixed income development to solve the specific problems of this community. To protect the low income tenants after control of the development was turned over to a developer, the APFFC felt it was necessary to include in the design a provision that would require elected tenant representatives to act as general partners with any developer chosen. By acting as general partners the tenant representatives could insure that residents were treated fairly throughout the process.

In September of 1972 the APFFC released their report with the recommendation that the America Park development be phased out and replaced with an MHFA development. Results of the study did not come as a surprise to most Lynn residents. The Daily Evening Item had been following the progress of

the committee for sometime. On September 1, 1972, the paper ran the following headline, "Officials Praise Plans For New America Park." Thomas Atkins, Secretary of Community Affairs for the Commonwealth, along with other local and state political officials publically gave their support to the program. Mayor Antonio Marino stated that "the program would be of great benefit to the city, by providing decent housing and enhancing the city."<sup>4</sup> City Councilor Poole announced that "he would introduce a resolution at the next regular meeting of the City Council asking for the support of that body in this worthwhile venture."<sup>5</sup> Senator Carrigan stated that "the important factor in the proposed development was that it would provide the city with a revenue producing base, as well as removing the blight which has been associated with the project in recent years."<sup>6</sup> The greatest level of support came from the America Park Associates, the tenant association of America Park.

Official work of the APFFC moved towards gaining more information on demolition costs as well as gaining the support of legislators for the concept of replacing public housing with mixed income housing. The State House became a busy and important element in the redevelopment of America Park. House Majority Leader, Thomas W. McGee, agreed to support the legislation needed and introduce it to the legislators if the total number of units constructed was decreased from 1000 to a maximum of 800. The APFFC agreed and McGee introduced two bills that would have effect on the future of America Park. House Bill 5793 was constructed specifically to allow the redevelopment of America Park to move forward. 5793 would expand the present state modernization program to include "writing down the outstanding indebtedness of a state public housing development to allow it to be sold, to be cleared or partially cleared, and the land used for the development of a new project, financed through the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency."<sup>7</sup> The

second bill, House 2422, although not designed specifically for the Lynn program would be of benefit to it. 2422 would provide rental assistance for any residents who would be displaced due to the demolition or sale of "low rent projects."

The Urban Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator Joseph Timilty and Representative Joseph Brett, received numerous letters of support for the bills. Among these were two from DCA, one from Thomas Atkins and the other from Lewis Crampton, Commissioner of DCA. William J. White, Executive Director of MHFA, went on record supporting the bills. White, who had many times publically stated that economically and racially mixed housing was the only viable alternative to public housing had wanted a test like that offered by America Park for some time. The passage of the bills would allow MHFA to extend the MHFA philosophy to the problem of public housing.

Representative James Smith, D-Lynn, made an open statement addressed toward the Urban Affairs Committee. Smith argued that the passage of the bills would allow the state to use America Park as a pilot program for deteriorated public housing. Fred Bowler, of the LHA, requested that serious consideration be given to the passage of the bills as they allowed for the type of remedies that were needed in America Park.

The most effective statement of support came from the new Chairwoman of the America Park Associates and tenant representative to the APFFC, Mrs. Eleanor Atkins Wessell. Mrs. Wessell emphasized that it was the tenants more-so than any other group, who wanted the present development taken down and replaced with mixed income housing. She went on to remind the Urban Affairs Committee that they, the tenants, were the ones forced to endure the conditions of America Park.

In October of 1973, the House Bills were passed allowing for the America Park/MHFA pilot project. On November 30, 1973, the LHA called the moratorium on accepting tenants to America Park. The authority agreed that it would in the future, only house those families who were in need of emergency shelter. Because of the high turnover rate in America Park, committee members felt that by calling the moratorium the number of tenants in the development would stabilize. Not only would it be easier to estimate the apartment need for tenants of America Park but the moratorium could reduce the development to the point that developers would feel it was manageable.

Now that the road looked clear for construction of a new development neither MJFA nor the APFFC had any idea how much of an interest there would be in the project on the part of developers. To initially measure interest Mrs. Wessell representing the APFFC, sent letters to numerous developers asking if they would consider such a project. Response to the letters was very encouraging to the committee. Members knew that there was a chance that the city would be selling the Pike Land across the street from the entrance to America Park. Arthur Winn, of Sydney and Winn Development Associates, submitted to the city a detailed proposal for the development of the Pike Land. Mr. Winn was approached and discussions were held around the possibility of incorporating the America Park project into his work. There was however, some doubt that Mr. Winn would accept all America Park tenants in any development he constructed. In a memorandum sent to the committee he implied that there were certain families in the project who were considered undesirable and for the success of a new development he suggested relocating these persons to the Curwin Circle development. The tenant representatives took exception to Winn's statement. Yet Winn's point was well taken for it opened the door to a number of discussions on problem families in America Park.

Mrs. Wessell and the new vice president of America Park Associates, Mr. Daniel Wessell, stated under no terms would they accept any plans for the forced removal of any tenants. The tenant association, which had come under fire by the Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants for virtually agreeing that public housing did not always work, was caught in a bind. Everyone realized that there were some families in America Park that could cause problems in a new development. However, elected officials of the tenant association represented everyone in the project and not just those who outsiders perceived as being desirable.

Some members of the APFFC held that the relocation staff, LHA, or MHFA could if necessary, take action and quietly remove problem families. The relocation staff would be in a position to encourage these families to seek housing options outside of the development. The LHA while still in control of the project, could evict those families that had neglected to pay their rent. However, this method would also remove some of those who were considered good tenants while leaving some problem families. MHFA spokespersons felt that some areas viewed as problems were problems unique only to a public housing development. They doubted that such problems would carry over to a mixed income development but if they did they assured the committee that they knew how to handle them. If any person continued to be a problem in a new development the management would have justified ground for eviction.

Dan Wessell found fault with MHFA's view that tenants could be evicted so easily from the new development. Mr. Wessell pointed out that it was not fair to let a family move in only to put them out. The financial loss of relocation funds as well as the emotional loss incurred after waiting and anticipating new housing, only to lose it could be a serious blow to tenants.

Tenant representatives decided to discuss this in an open meeting of the tenant association. They carefully explained the problem to those residents attending the meeting and asked for the tenants response to the issue. Surprisingly, residents were in favor of the forced removal of some families. Of course, none considered that their family could possibly be one that would be evicted. This was evident by the fact that many who supported the eviction posture were among the group considered problem tenants. Mr. and Mrs. Wessell attempted to impress the tenants with the seriousness of their decision yet the vote did not change. Understanding that many residents would lose their chance of receiving new housing tenant representatives decided to go against the wishes of the residents. They held firm to their position in future meetings and finally won the agreement of fellow APFFC members to allow all residents the right to remain.

It became clear to tenant representatives that throughout any process or redevelopment they would have to take on a more active role for the protection of tenants. When House Bill 5793 was passed there was included a requirement for tenant representation from the initial project proposal to the implementation stages. Every tenant must be able to review final plans as well as have the opportunity to express their opinion on the plans in a public hearing. This was found to be an excellent method of tenant protection in the early process of redeveloping America Park. However, there was no legal requirement that there be any degree of tenant participation after the approval of any new plans. The APFFC had earlier given this area some attention although there was no decision on how this could best be addressed. Tenant representatives on the committee were well aware that there could be problems in the future of the development concerning the rights of tenants in a new development. Would some tenants start their life in a new development with a clear slate while



others were followed by their past experiences in America Park? Would the records kept by LHA follow the tenants into the new development? Would or could these factors stop tenants at some later point from receiving new housing?

To protect all tenants from any possible repercussions, tenant representatives informed committee members that they believed that each tenant should receive a written guarantee assuring them that they would receive new housing as long as they did not violate future regulations. They also felt that the LHA should agree that they would not release any information, whether written or oral, concerning the credibility of any resident to any developer interested in the project or chosen for the project. This would allow everyone the chance to start a new life in a new development without fear of their past experiences in America Park harming the future.

Giving every resident a written guarantee to remain in a new development was a controversial issue in the APFFC. Everyone realized that there were those tenants who might cause problems. However, it had already been decided that all tenants would be allowed to remain. Releasing a written guarantee would only formalize what had orally been agreed. Further, a written guarantee could reassure tenants that they would receive a unit in the new development as long as they violated no regulations.

Discussions around the future protection of America Park tenants in a new development prompted the APFFC to include in the program design a provision that would continue to protect these tenants. Elected tenant representatives would serve as general partners with any developer chosen to preform the project. Not only would they have input into the implementation procedures used by a developer but they would also receive 1% of the profits obtained from the development. This profit would be put back into the new community and

offer a possible source of funding for support services.

Tenant representatives held that since the new development was to be constructed in response to the problems of America Park tenants, attention should be given to what the tenants would like to see in a new community. In meetings held with tenants to determine what their desires were, the tenant representatives found that residents wanted the development of a community that would not have any physical or social division of residents. Tenants felt that a new community should contain:

Storage Facilities	Compactors
Laundry hookups	Security
FCC Antennas	Community Rooms
Shopping Areas	Teen Center
Closets	Large Rooms
Garages	Kitchens with windows
Plexiglass	Street Lighting
Private Play Areas	No Pets or Leash Law enforced
Large Yards	Own Thermostats
Screens	Swimming Pools
Air Conditioning	Skating Rinks
Strict Management	Wider Streets
Social-Economic Mix	Social Services
Better Lighting	Better Image
Disposals	

The APFFC found when tenant desires were measured, that the total number of residents in the development had again declined. While the total number of tenants had been 350 when the APFFC began their investigations it dropped 260. The total population remaining was 1162 with 803 persons under the age of 18. Only 245 units would be needed now for on-site low income residents and 24 for moderate income families. Any new development would need only contain the following for America Park families:

- 40 One bedroom Units
- 55 Two bedroom Units
- 97 Three bedroom Units
- 42 Four bedroom Units
- 26 Five bedroom Units
- 5 Six bedroom units
- 4 Seven bedroom Units

Although the APFFC had wanted the development to decrease to a size where it would be easier to manage, no one had anticipated such a loss of tenants. Before the population decreased any further the committee increased their speed in implementing the program for a mixed income development.

## Chapter 3

### THE POLITICS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

While the APFFC had been deciding what the program for America Park should contain, the city was undergoing a transition that was to have serious impact on the plans for redevelopment. During the election year of 1973, Mayor Antonio Marino, who had supported the plan for the construction of a mixed income development, did not seek re-election. The city council which had been in favor of replacing America Park also experienced a turnover. Of the 13 member council, at least 6 members had reservations about a mixed income development.

Initial concern on the part of politicians arose after there had been two luxury hi-rise apartment buildings constructed in the city. Real estate agents reported that after the completion of these new developments, there would no longer be any demand for such units. With the APFFC and MHFA planning on constructing a development somewhere between 700 and 800 units that would be dependent upon a demand from moderate and middle income families, some council members felt that the city should reconsider their position.

Even though residents of America Park had been informed of the plans for a new development, many of those remaining were skeptical that they would never see a change in the project. It was during this time that the APFFC had to weight the growing reluctance of city officials against the continuing physical and social deterioration of America Park. The committee believed that there would be a demand for any market units built in an MHFA development. Renting the market units in the MHFA development should be easier than in other developments due to the presence of the subsidy programs. Feeling that council members would take another look at the whole America Park situation and again realize the need for a new development, the committee continued to

perform their function as though no potential problems existed.

This chapter will examine how the APFFC carried out its effort to implement its program design in the face of growing local political opposition. The consensus of the planning phase became adversarial as the project moved from the APFFC discussions to actually attempting to carry out that design.

#### THE MOVE TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

A subgroup of the APFFC was formed to begin work on a developer's kit. This group was composed of representatives from America Park Associates, DCA, MHFA and the LHA. In April of 1974, the group published a developer's pamphlet and the necessary appendices for anyone interested in the project. The developers pamphlet outlined how the possibility of performing such a project came about and explained the relationship that would have to exist between tenant representatives and the developer. The sub-committee briefly detailed the following criteria that would be used for the selection of a developer:<sup>8</sup>

"The quality of the apartment design and site plan. All units at all income levels must be of the highest quality."

"The marketability of the proposed apartments to people of all income groups. This will place extra weight on the quality of the apartments, the community facilities and the marketing program."

"The financial feasibility of the development proposal and the financial support of the developer."

"The experience, skill and competence of the development team including the developer, the management agent, the architect and the contractor."

Any developer meeting these criteria could, it was believed, produce not only the type of community that would reassure America Park tenants but also Lynn residents and officials. By designing apartment of the highest quality without

differing between the various income groups there could be a mesh between residents of all income levels.

Because of the lack of support services the incorporation of community facilities had always been a portion of the committee's plan. Those desired by America Park tenants were not necessarily those to be included but they gave interested developers some notion of what was wanted. Many of those suggested by America Park tenants could help to make a new community a more desirable community to market tenants.

Financial feasibility too, had always been an important element as far as the APFFC was concerned. They, as well as the other actors who were now involved, wanted to insure the economic future of a new community. It made no sense to consider any developer who did not have the financial backing needed.

One of the most important elements to a successful development was to be the management and the system established to run the project. Interested developers having their own management teams had to be able to show the success of such management. Those not having management personnel had to illustrate that they had access to a qualified outside firm to handle management.

Managing the new development was to be unlike that of any other apartment complex. Because of the income mix and the origin of the low income families, the manager needed to be sensitive to the goals outlined for the development and the reason for their existence. The unique arrangement that allowed tenant representatives to act as general partners in the development also gave them a right to have a role in management.

Everyone realized that the transition from public to private housing

could be a frightening experience for some tenants. Many residents, in particular, many of the children, had never known anything other than public housing. Considering the preponderance of children in development this fact had to be given special attention. For this reason, the APFFC had decided that support services would be an important element to the success of any development. Developers and their managers were to present an outline for social services that would assist tenants during the period of transition. The APFFC recommended that where possible the developer hire America Park tenants to fill positions in social services or other on-site departments such as maintenance. Not only could this help with relations between the new developer and his new tenants but it could also help to insure that the new community would have a solid economic foundation.

Those members who composed the developer's pamphlet included a section on the importance of sound relations between the developer and governmental agencies. The cooperation of city officials was a necessity. There were zoning regulations to be changed, approvals for road changes if any were to be made must come from the city and any other revisions to the present infra-structure would also need city approval. The statement of the committee told that discussions had been held with a number of city personnel and that they had assured the committee that there would be continued cooperation between the two groups. However, at the time of publication, such was not the case. Some city officials had promised that the city would not pose any problems yet most of these persons were leaving office. Present relations with the city were, to say the least, strained. Indicating that any other relationship existed only gave a false impression.

To assist the developers in understanding how construction was to carry on while all tenants remained on-site, the group explained that the LHA with

the assistance of the MHFA relocation staff would begin clearing sections of the development. Until the time that the new developer took control over America Park the LHA would continue to demolish those structures they found unfeasible to keep open. At the time of the publication of the kit, the LHA had demolished 34 units while 105 remained vacant.

When the proposals were submitted on June 17, 1974, a number of qualified and impressive developers had indeed been interested in the project. A pre-arranged committee of representatives of DCA, MHFAM Lynn Housing Authority and America Park Associates sat down to designate who would be the developer for the project. Cockran, Mullins and Jennison, (CMJ), who had just finished another MHFA development, Queen Anne's Gate in Weymouth, was given the option on the land and construction of the America Park pilot program. In a speech made for CMJ, Joseph Mullins was questioned as to why they had been interested in the project. Mullins stated that they had considered the good points of the land, present infra-structure, MJFA and DCA funding, the need for a minimal amount of up front money, backing of politicians and the profits from a development this size and felt that they far outweighed the negative points. Those points which CMJ considered negative were those which the APFFC had considered: the fact that the developer would have to share control of the project, that a guarantee would be given to everyone residing in the development after November 30th, the history and liability of America Park and finally that the construction would have to be staged. Yet, CMJ believed that this was the best site in Lynn and with the residential area surrounding the project, a mixed income development would succeed here.

To the tenant organization, CMJ appeared to be exactly what they desired in a developer. Tenant representatives realized that the developer not only



had to be sensitive to the people of America Park but also had to work hand in hand with them for the success of the program. The first opportunity for the two groups to work together came when the tenants found the drawings submitted by the CMJ architect to be unacceptable. The developers pamphlet had explained that the residents of America Park, after visiting various MHFA developments and consulting with staff architects, had decided that they wanted townhouses constructed. The pamphlet had even given some of the desires expressed by tenants in the relocation survey. None of this had been reflected in the design submitted by the architect. Instead he designed four separate community areas with no inter connection between them. None of the units resembled townhouses. The architect was asked to revise his plans; however, he refused. Tenant representatives and CMJ felt it was necessary to dismiss him and bring on another architect who would reflect the desires of the tenants. New plans for the development called for the construction of garden apartments with 1 and 2 bedrooms, midrise buildings with 1 and 2 bedrooms and townhouses with from 3 to 7 bedrooms. The buildings were not separated as in the previous drawings allowing for the foundation of one cohesive community. The plans were acceptable and the America Park pilot program appeared to be underway. Now a first rate, well-financed developer-builder had been added to the coalition that wanted to build a mixed income development. The political weight and staying power of CMJ would be critical in the ensuing months of political confrontation.

#### POLITICAL CONFRONTATIONS

When the APFFC had been awaiting the return of applications for the project, they shifted their attention to the city. Regretfully, America Park again made the headlines of the Daily Evening Item when two children were discovered dead inside refrigerators in vacant apartments. Jim Tagalakis,

a reporter for the paper, took this opportunity to remind all Lynn citizens of the tragic conditions in America Park. Mr. Tagalakis wrote:

"More than 4 years ago in a supplement of public housing in Lynn, we wrote: 'Chalk up one more victory for frustration. Add to this the squalor of America Park and the feeling of many of its residents of 2nd class citizenship and you have a perfect setting for the depressive mood which hangs over the city's largest low income housing project, a definite eyesore both in esthetic and material terms.'"<sup>9</sup>

The antagonism towards the new MJFA development continued to rise. Elected officials insisted that there was no demand for the project even though the APFFC had earlier performed a market study which indicated the opposite. Many refused to concede that the development could be a revenue producing agent for the city while America Park not only did not produce revenue but subtracted from what little money the city did have. Whether or not city officials had reasons for disagreeing with the America Park program that they did not care to disclose, is still unknown. Whatever the reasons, they stood firm on their new beliefs and did everything possible to stop progress towards building the new development.

CMJ, who had thought that everything was ready for them to move ahead with the project, quickly found that such was not the case. Although they had been lead to believe that there were not problems with the local politicians they soon found that such was not the case. There was a great deal of talk in political circles of Lynn around plans for a pilot program. Since plans were finalized concern on the part of local residents began to increase. Eleanor Atkins Wessell, President of the tenant association and tenant representative, attempted to reassure citizens that the new development held no threat for them. During open meetings in Lynn, Mrs. Wessell tried to explain

the concept for the development to residents of the city. Attendance on the part of America Park tenants at city meetings was impressive. However, residents never voiced their opinions, they sat and were subjected to the dehumanizing comments made by their fellow Lynn residents.

"We had meetings in this town. We went, we all went. (Mrs. Wessell); she tell us not to say nothing no matter what happens. Those rich white women, they called us pigs, cows and horses, you hear me. Pigs, cows and horses. But we sat and didn't say nothin. (Mrs. Wessell) she sat there with tears coming out of her eyes. But she didn't give up. No she didn't."

It began to appear that perhaps the fear surrounding the construction of a MHFA development was related to a general fear of public housing and its residents. It was almost as though residents saw the new development as the beginning of another, yet larger America Park. As long as America Park remained as it was residents did not vocally contest it, changes in the status quo seemed to make them nervous.

The City Council and Planning Board tried to put an end to everyone's concern over the future of America Park by re-zoning the land from an apartment district to light industrial. They further refused to accept the subdivision plans submitted by CMJ to the planning office. However, instead of closing the subject, they set the stage for a political confrontation that they would never forget.

The actions taken by the council put everyone up in arms. CMJ, who believed that they were about to begin negotiations with a receptive council was stunned. DCA, who at this point, wanted the pilot program as badly as the America Park tenants, gathered personnel to begin investigations into the situation. MHFA's hands were tied; they had to have city approval to carry

out this program. Tenants of the development had mixed feelings about the actions. Some took the opinion that they knew it would never really happen, it was too good to be true. Others felt that the city had tried to take away the last ounce of hope for them and they refused to sit quietly by as they did it.

Mrs. Wessell realized that what was about to unfold would either make or break the new development. She was also keen enough to sense that it would not be a battle of the minds but rather of politics. With the assistance of other tenants, a massive campaign to register America Park residents to vote was held. Results were good, over 3/4 of those residents who had not been registered did so at this time.

Mrs. Wessell's campaign did not end here. The association knew that registering tenants to vote would pay off but the November election was months away. Attempts were made to begin communication with local residents to sway their support. The results were nonetheless, disappointing.

Legally, CMJ had every right to drop their option on the project. The group could have taken both MHFA and the APFFC to court for bringing them into this venture under false impressions. They had, after all, put in the developer's pamphlet that relations with the city were good and would continue to be so. CMJ decided however, that regardless of the problems they had encountered, they were still interested in the project. So, instead of filing suit against MHFA, they filed against the Lynn City Council and Planning Board.

Although DCA was concerned over the actions taken in Lynn, they viewed the matter in an entirely different scope. The Secretary of Community Affairs, William Flynn, called in MJFA, CMJ and the tenant representatives and assured them that they would have the continued support of the state. As none of

them were in a position to "play the heavy" during this confrontation, Flynn stated that they would take on this role and handle any flak that resulted. It was felt this was the best tactic to take and all agreed that the state was in a better position to do this. In the meantime CMJ announced that they would tell the city that they were going to decrease the total number of units constructed from 800 to 654. CMJ thought that perhaps the size of the development was the reason that the city was presenting obstacles and they could at this time safely decrease the size and still be able to provide for all America Park residents and have a profit from market tenants.

In August of 1975 the city submitted their Housing Allowance Plan (HAP) to DCA for review. The HAP was vital to the city's future plans. They were requesting the federal government to allocate 3.2 million in Community Development Block Grant funds. The HAP submitted to DCA did not meet the state's approval and it was given a negative review.

After receiving the negative HAP review a meeting was scheduled between Flynn and Mayor Phillips. Flynn informed the Mayor that it may have not crossed his mind but if the plans for mixed housing on this site did not go through it would still be a public housing development under the control of the state. Zoning changes or not, if the plans were not implemented the state would rehabilitate America Park and let it stand as public housing. Flynn stressed the point that this would strictly be a low income rehabilitation program. Phillips felt that "if the present plans were modified and there would be a better tax return to the city and fewer multi-bedroom units, it would be possible for him to agree with the plans."<sup>10</sup>

The to-be or not-to-be status of America Park was given considerable attention in the Daily Evening Item. Councilor Raymond Reardon accused Flynn of blackmailing the city by holding back any favorable approval of the

HAP until the city reversed its stance on America Park. Literally, Reardon was correct.

Court actions were moving at a very slow pace. It looked as though the case could remain on the court calendar for years. The elections were however, moving at a faster pace and it became evident that America Park would become a decisive element to any candidate's election. Antonio Marino, the mayor who had originally given the city's support decided that he would rerun for mayor. Marino's platform contained one area of crucial importance, he pledged to support plans for redeveloping America Park. Therefore, he was sure of at least one solid block of votes, those of the newly registered voters of America Park.

During the end of September, 1975, Flynn invited the Lynn City Council to have a chat with him. As he had with the mayor, Flynn pointed out to the council that if present plans failed, public housing would remain at America Park. There would not be any industry as long as the state held control over the property. On October 3rd, five of the 13 councilors went on record opposing the development. When the five released their statement to the press they framed it in such a manner that the reader would believe they were standing up against public housing. Articles around their announcement carried headlines that "Councilors oppose Rebuilding America Park" and that "Councilors say State is Forcing Housing on Lynn."

In the November election Antonio Marino was again elected mayor. Marino announced that if the council would approve plans for the new development, he also would. Control over the issue was therefore put into the hands of the council. Many of the original councilors against the plan had been reelected although they did not hold a majority of the votes.

Approval of the plan would require 8 positive votes to allow for the needed permits.

CMJ went to work on impressing the council with the plans. The option they held on the project would end on March 31st. Court actions were at a standstill and the entire project for CMJ was riding on the council. Arrangements were made to take the Council on a tour of Queen Anne's Gate in Weymouth. CMJ began to search to find what part of the plan the Council found objectionable to examine if there was any possible area of compromise. It did not take long to find that even though they had lowered the development size to 654 units this was still too large to the council. Further, the construction of 5 or more bedrooms was another disapproving factor.

Decreasing the amount of units again as well as eliminating the larger units was not a step that CMJ felt they could take alone. Tenant representatives acting as General Partners, would have to be consulted. Eliminating all 5, 6 and 7 bedroom units would force 35 families to relocate off-site. Throughout this entire process tenant representatives had stated that no one would be forced to move. Yet, representatives still wanted the new development but at the least possible cost to the tenants. Agreement was reached that as the total number of tenants had dropped the development size could safely be decreased to 441. However, tenant representatives refused to agree to the removal of all families in need of 5 bedrooms. Instead, CMJ architects designed a townhouse with a family room/den area on the main floor. These units, for the sake of officials, would be known as 4a's while to anyone inside the development they were to be known as the units for anyone who needed 5 bedrooms.

After the first of 1976, CMJ's case against the city was finally heard

in court. Before they lost their option the court decreed that CMJ be given a building permit and that the previous zoning laws be adapted. CMJ in return, presented the court with the compromise package. The new MHFA community was underway.

Had CMJ, DCA and the members of the APFFC not been so determined about replacing America Park with a mixed income development, they never would have overcome the obstacles created by the city. However, there as a real determination to see the problem of America Park corrected and to see it replaced with MHFA housing. CMJ wanted the project, not only would it be a profit making venture but it could make quite a name for CMJ in the field. DCA wanted the project to go through for several reasons. America Park, as chapter 200 housing, was their responsibility. The state had invested a great deal of money in the development and if it was replaced with MHFA housing they would no longer be required to allocate funds. Members of the APFFC had worked long and hard trying to develop a solution to the America Park problem. Replacing the project with MHFA units would address all aspects of the problem. Because of the interest of every actor, there was a staying power that could not be matched by local politicians. Had the court case in ruling not been favorable, they would have found another avenue by which to handle the city.



## Chapter 4

### THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION: BETWEEN AMERICA PARK and KING'S LYNNE

"As the Sundial casts a moving story  
of time...so in time evolves the drama  
of change.

The settlers of Lynn called their new  
home Lynn bringing something of their  
past to blend with their future. In that  
spirit, we take King's Lynne as our name  
and the sundial as our symbol. We, like  
Lynn's first settlers have fulfilled a  
dream in building this community and the  
drama of change is at hand. So as the  
sundial casts a slow movement of time...  
so King's Lynne moves to fulfill many  
dreams and to build a better future for  
us all....."

But there were many clouds to pass over the sun before the fulfillment of the dream. During the period of transition from public to private housing, the America Park community was constantly in a state of flux. Coming to study the community in February of 1977 afforded the opportunity to watch this transition, and to note the confrontations and problems that had not been accounted for in the program design but that had to be coped with if the project were to move ahead. Some issues proved to be minor and had no effect on the outcome of the design. Others were of such magnitude that their resolution was central to the outcome of the program.

The largest problem observed in the community was that of communication among all actors; CMJ, management, the tenant council, tenants and social services. A major issue existed as to the definition of the actors in the new stage of the development's life. Fear and uncertainty on the part of residents was also a problem. Not only were adults in general afraid of the implications of a mixed income development, but young people also were becoming increasingly hostile towards the program due to similar fears. This chapter will examine these occurrences from the time of the CMJ take-

over until the first group of America Park residents move into their new units. It will also examine the methods used to reconcile these problems.

COMMUNICATION: CMJ AND TENANTS

When CMJ came on to the America Park site the development still had a number of problems passed on from the LHA. The heating systems were troublesome. Animals still roamed freely. Tenants continued to work on their automobiles on the lawns. Rodents were still on the bottom of the hill and cockroaches were still throughout the project. CMJ, along with Eleanor and Dan Wessell, realized that it would be difficult for the area to instantaneously change from public to private housing. The process would require time.

One of the first acts performed by CMJ and their partners after the LHA relinquished their control over the property, was to rename America Park. King's Lynne was the chosen name and the sundial the symbol for the development. The passage previously cited, written by an America Park tenant, clearly illustrates why the name and symbol were chosen.

CMJ began their role as owner of the development by sponsoring a massive clean-up project held in conjunction with tenants. Dumpsters were positioned throughout the development to allow tenants to dispose of larger items such as furniture, car parts, bicycles and so on that littered the grounds. A full time maintenance staff was brought on to keep the grounds clean. Excessive trash not collected by tenants was removed; and the maintenance crew began work on the lawns.

The partnership furthered the transformation process by having new leases drawn up. Tenants were informed that in order to remain in the development they would have to sign a new lease. Unlike previous leases, this new one would require both male and female adults residing together in

a unit to sign. Previously if a female had a male, (or vice versa), living with her, she did not have to report his residency. Tenants view this as a protective device, one that allowed extra income to come in to a family while they still were collecting full welfare benefits. Since the concept of an MHFA development is based on residents paying rent according to family income, CMJ had to know who had any extra persons earning income living in a unit. Meetings were held to explain to residents what was required of them and the reason it was necessary. They were assured that the information would be kept confidential and not released to the Department of Welfare. Also, tenants were told that this information would not effect the amount of money they paid for rent until they moved into the new development.

The process continued with CMJ instituting rules and regulations that would help ready tenants for life in a mixed income development. Sessions were held again with tenants explaining what conduct was no longer acceptable in King's Lynne. Residents could not repair their automobiles on the premises, nor would automobiles be permitted to remain on the lawns. Tenants were not to leave articles outside of the doors of their units. All trash disposed of was to be put into dumpsters scattered throughout the development. Tenants were discouraged from having loud parties, turning music up or any other act that might disturb their neighbors. Further, in order to remain for the new development, tenants owning pets were to remove their animals or they would loose their written guarantee to remain.

Needless to say, residents were not universally supportive of all the regulations for the development. In particular, most tenants took exception to giving up their pets. Even though tenants were given sufficient time to

dispose of their animals, some refused to comply with the rule. It was ironic that some took this attitude as one of the desires uncovered by tenant representatives was to have the leash law or no pet rule of the LHA enforced for dogs since they were a real problem. An estimation done on the number of stray dogs roaming in packs throughout the grounds showed close to 300. This did not include those that belonged to tenants or the other numerous animals on the grounds. For King's Lynne to succeed, animals would have to go.

Tenant representatives knew that it would be difficult for some residents to part with their animals so they encouraged residents to consider finding outside homes for them. For those who could not find a place for their pets, the representatives made arrangements with the Humane Society to remove those animals that tenants requested picked up. The city pound was also brought in to remove stray dogs and cats.

CMJ realized that some residents were upset about the no pet announcement. They also had another announcement to make that would not be received warmly by some tenants. Those families residing in the development who needed the larger bedrooms had to be notified that they would not be able to remain in King's Lynne. CMJ, along with the on-site relocation staff, began to search for accommodations for these families in the Lynn community. When the announcement was made CMJ found that tenants were far more hostile than anticipated. That some persons who wanted to remain in King's Lynne were being forced to leave added to the fact that tenants were being forced to get rid of their pets created a great deal of hostility toward CMJ early on.

"I think the whole thing is a hoax. In the beginning they were to build six bedrooms, now they aren't. Nobody is looking after the needs of large families."

COMMUNICATION: TENANT REPRESENTATIVES & TENANTS

The only way that the method of communication between tenant representatives and tenants can be explained is by first noting that the representatives were also the general partners of the development. Although they were in this position for the protection of the tenants, residents often viewed them as a combination of management, which will be discussed later, and CMJ. The roles that the tenant representatives had been placed in required that they spend a great deal of time working with both management and CMJ. Because they were so frequently seen with them, tenants began to identify their representatives as an extension of management and CMJ.

Dan and Eleanor Wessell attempted to keep in contact with tenants during this period by sponsoring information sessions to inform tenants about progress towards the new community. Tenants were divided into groups according to their location in the development and thus their expected date for moving. Group sizes tended to be small ranging from 10 to 20 persons per session. The size was to be an asset as it would allow tenant representatives to give each resident individual attention. Sessions tended to begin with the representatives explaining what had been occurring with the developer in the last few months. Explanations were given on the differences between the three types of units and the number of rooms each would have available. Room sizes were given and to assist tenants in understanding all of the data they were receiving, representatives showed scale drawings of each unit. Cardboard furniture was used to show tenants how

much each room would hold. Tenants, who tended to be female due to the hour of the sessions, gazed intently at the drawings. The largest expression of emotion always happened when tenant representatives revealed the architect drawing of the future King's Lynne.

When the tenant representatives opened the floor to tenants for any possible questions, most residents asked things that pertained to their personal situation. Common questions dealt with the location of parking spaces, rent and utility costs, location of recreation facilities and security. Tenant representatives explained that everyone would have one assigned parking space in the lot next to their unit. For those families with more than one car extra space could be used in the nearest visitor lot. Moving on to rent always seemed to make residents shift a little in their chairs. Representatives explained that welfare recipients had received increases in the last three years while the LHA had not been able to institute any rent increases. MHFA guidelines for the low and moderate families were outlined and tenants were told that before being allowed to move all sources of income would have to be reported. Any person 18 years of age or older not enrolled in school any employed would also have to include the amount of money they earned as family income. It didn't take long for tenants to see that if their children remained at home while they worked or collected welfare, their rent could be increased. Tenant representatives conceded that some would be hurt because of this. Some people would just barely be above the \$8,000 low income category and would not be able to afford rent for a moderate unit. The same was true of families who had just enough income to push them into a middle income slot. The possibility of having rent increased from \$50.00 a month to \$350.00 a month made some consider leaving

the development.

When some tenants learned that there would not be any on-site permanent security forces in King's Lynne there was some concern expressed. The fact that there would be on-site management to handle potential problems did not seem to settle them. Nor did reminding them that crime had drastically decreased in the development. Tenants were told that during the construction phases there would be security guards hired to patrol the site to prevent the theft of materials. The Lynn Police had agreed to make the site one of their regular patrol zones and they would drive through several times nightly. However, the residents' concern did not center around construction stages but rather during the time when construction would be finished and they would be in new homes. They wanted a sense of security after moving into their new homes that they thought should be provided by CMJ.

COMMUNICATION: CMJ, TENANT REPRESENTATIVES AND HISPANIC RESIDENTS

There never were any physical inter racial confrontations in America Park and race never seemed to be an issue. The same held true in King's Lynne although of the minorities in the development, the Hispanic felt that they were not wanted there. At one time Hispanic residents were represented on the Board of Directors by a Hispanic resident, however, she moved leaving the position vacant. No one ever explained to the Hispanic that it was not an attempt to keep information away from them when their representative was not replaced but rather that an election could not be held until the by-laws permitted. Management and tenants representatives believed that there was no intentional discrimination against Hispanic families. It is pointed out that Hispanic never attended any meetings held to pass on information to tenants. The Hispanic retort that the meetings

were always in English and that they would not understand anything that was being said. Management and tenant representatives feel that they do understand the language and only use this as an excuse for their lack of participation. A few do understand enough English to attain some information and could translate the information for those who do not. The majority of Hispanic heads of households do not understand the language. This was found to be true through my own trial and error. After the first interview I held with a Hispanic woman I sat down to review my notes. I realized that I had been with this woman for one hour and that she really did not understand anything I asked her. She was capable of explaining her thought and feelings to be in broken English yet she did not understand the questions I asked her. If this could happen in my own encounter it could surely happen in others. Results obtained from the Hispanic families proved to be entirely different when I approached them using their own language. The social service employee who had worked for the welfare department was aware of how the Hispanic felt. On several occasions she held meetings with the families with a translator provided by an outside agency. During these meetings it was found that because of the language barrier the Hispanic felt that CMJ was not going to let them stay when the new units were built. Letters from management were used as evidence of a plot against them. Copies of letters sent to other families were used by the social service worker to illustrate that there was no plan to get rid of them. What it all boiled down to was information not being presented in both languages. Had it been provided in Spanish also, there would have been no basis for suspicion on the part of the Hispanic.



## THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

As soon as the transfer of ownership was made from the housing authority to the partnership, CMJ brought in a private manager to handle the development. The manager, a black female, was warmly received by the residents. However, she did not remain as manager long and was replaced in mid-February, 1977. Tenants recalled how the manager made attempts to know everyone, how she used to walk through the development and speak to residents. When she spotted potential problems, the manager would often walk up to the door and politely ask the person if they were aware of what was happening. She was not however, the picture of strict management that the tenants had earlier requested. Yet, at the time they made that request they had no idea that there would be strict rules for management to enforce. Thus the style of this manager counter balanced the effect of those rules. The outcome pleased most tenants. Her stance on issues seemed to be flexible. If a tenant was late paying their rent, she went to see if there were any unusual problems that perhaps she should be aware of. Yet this mild mannered way of hers became a problem when the tenant representatives felt that it directly contradicted the rules and regulations and goals for the new development. Tenants were suppose to be adapting to a different lifestyle. Instead they often would perform the same actions they had in America Park without worry about the rules. The manager had lead tenants to believe that she would tolerate this type of behavior. Instead of being a serious portion of the new development, management was more of a game to tenants. Even though it was felt that this woman was in her own way a good manager and that she could change her style to continue on at King's Lynne whe did not remain.

In February CMJ brought in a manager from one of their other develop-

ments. Again, the manager was a woman, but this time a white woman. Neither CMJ nor the tenant representatives realized that when they replaced the first manager with a white woman, some tenants perceived it as racial action. They felt that the first manager had been run out of the position so that she could be replaced by a non-minority.

The image projected by this manager was entirely different from the first. She knew exactly what the rules were for the development and set out to enforce them. Pets were to be off the premises by the end of the month so she dictated letters to tenants reminding them that they would lose their privileges if the animal stayed. Late rent payments were not tolerated. Rent was due on the first of every month in either the form of a money order or check. This inconvenienced some residents who did not have checking accounts. In order to purchase a money order the residents had to have a car or take the MBTA. Any tenant whose payment was late found that they received a letter stating that their payment was overdue. The new manager made her stance clear, everyone was to go by the rules. First violations meant a letter or warning for a resident while further violations went into background files established on residents. Information in the files could be grounds for termination of guarantees.

With the fighting of management control some changes responsive to most of the tenants. Even though they lived in the same, or if relocated, different homes, the development was viewed as a different place in which to live. Because of the various problems in structures, management had the maintenance crew working on a 24 hour emergency basis. Items that tenants had tried to have repaired for years were now working. Vandalism in the development decreased at a rate noted by tenants. Drug traffic within the

development ceased. There were other positive visible changes in the environment. Residents noticed the difference it made to have cars only in parking spaces. Tenants noticed that there no longer was any trash around and that the grounds were now well kept. This does not mean that everyone felt that because King's Lynne was a cleaner place than America Park that it was worth it. Many tenants felt that the costs involved in having a new home were high. Some felt that they were too high. The number of tenants residing in the development began to decrease again. Some residents moved before money became available for relocation benefits so the decision to move could not be attributed to the availability of money. Tenants who remained felt that many of those who left did so because of their frustrations with rules. About ten families were lost when the tenants decided to turn in their guarantees and keep their pets. After relocation money was available the number of tenants dropped again. A few tenants took the money and used it as a down payment on a home. Some purchased mobile homes with their money while others continued to rent.

Although management would never tolerate deviate behavior it was a relief to everyone when the anticipated confrontations with problem families did not occur. Among the residents who made the decisions not to stay for the new development were all of the persons that were considered problem tenants. It should be stressed that there never was any effort made to intentionally eliminate these families. By April 1977 there remained 130 on-site families with 25 families preferring temporary off-site relocation.

Attrition and the pressure of enjoying "private management" system resulted in the winding down of the size of the tenant population.

### THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

As indicated throughout this study, "Social Services" were seen as critical to the period of transition from America Park to King's Lynne. Therefore, the implementation of the concept was a critical element during this period.

Mr. Joseph Cochran suggested a male for the position of director of King's Lynne social service team. After gaining the approval of both CMJ and the general partners, he was hired. His immediate objective was to formulate a program to help tenants through the period of transition. Three staff persons had already been hired, one female tenant to act as a resource person, one female who lived in the surrounding community to act as secretary and one female who had previously resided in America Park and had been responsible for the tenants when she worked for the Department of Welfare. Later, a male resident was hired to work with the youth of King's Lynne.

Since one of the objectives of King's Lynne was to create an economically sound community, the social service team began by canvassing the Lynn community for employment opportunities for tenants. The first openings found were literally in their own backyard. Construction would begin in the spring of 1977 and the social service team found that they could place a few male residents here. A small problem arose when the union which all construction members belonged to refused to allow the new employees to pay their dues after they started work. They were either to pay ahead of time or not work at all. Conversations with the men showed that none of them had the \$1,000 dues available. Nor could any of them receive a loan from local banks. No one known as an America Park tenant received credit in Lynn. The social service director quietly arranged payment for the

dues and had the men sign notes in his office. He took a big chance; but he felt it was worth it. All dues were paid by the director with the residents agreeing to pay him a small amount of money each pay period. Every man paid his loan in full.

There were scattered job openings for a few other residents in the city. The most significant number of openings was obtained from a newly opened Burger King. Positions were to be for teens for the development to allow them a chance to earn their own money. Teenage girls, in particular, were targeted. It was a prevailing belief that many America Park girls became pregnant because they saw it as a source of easy income. Social Services attempted to show the youth what they were missing by having children at such an early age and that there were other methods to secure money besides welfare. Those girls who had already given birth were encouraged to re-enroll in the school system if they had not finished or seek employment if they had.

Social services continued by making themselves known in the community as trustworthy service agents. They wanted residents to feel if they had a problem or a concern they could come to social services and receive answers to their questions. Gaining the trust of the tenants was easier as the staff member who once worked for the Department of Welfare instilled this in tenants earlier. The resource person also helped gain the initial trust of residents since she was herself a tenant.

Social services and the tenant representatives identified the increasing hostility on the part of youth toward King's Lynne as an area that should be addressed by social services. Attention was directed towards developing a relationship with the youth of King's Lynne through the youth

worker. Over 500 persons under the age of 18 remained on-site. Their feelings about the new development were important, considering their numbers they could either make or break the project. For the younger children CMJ purchased street hockey equipment to allow them to form their own team. A basketball court was put in with additional space for skateboarding, hockey, etc. The youth worker found that many of the teens wanted a place where they could pay cards or just socialize together. Prior to King's Lynne the youth had met in an empty unit. Problems were numerous in the apartment teens from the surrounding towns knew that it was a place where they could go and have no adult supervision. The youth were informed that because of its location on the top of the hill they would have to vacate the unit to allow for demolition. Teens resented this and before the unit was torn down it was set on fire. Next the youth wanted to use the basement of the building once occupied by the LHA. The upstairs space had already been allocated as management, tenant representatives and social services were to move into the structure. The basement was available however, as it had been used as a catch all room for the housing authority's maintenance crew. Teens were told that they could have the space but they would have to clean it themselves. Many of the personnel did not think that they would do it. With the supervision of the youth worker, the area was cleaned in two days. Teens used the space as a make-shift drop in center. Unlike the previous one the teens agreed to have supervision and keep all non-residents out.

Youth were still hostile towards the idea of the King's Lynne development. They seemed to feel that because most adults were excited over new units they would not understand why they did not want it. In working with the youth it was found that the initial resentment centered around removal

of pets. When teenage girls went to view Queen Anne's Gate in a trip arranged by social services, it seems that the manager there raised her voice when one of the girls "touched the furniture" in a model apartment. The manager explained that children were not allowed to walk on the grass, climb trees or play ball except in posted areas. When the girls returned from the trip not only did they think the rules were too strict but they also disliked the uniform white walls, gas stoves and rules associated with leases. Boys, who never went on a similar trip, only had the word of the girls to take. The more they discussed King's Lynne the more they disliked the concept as a whole. Some teens overheard parents discussing issues surrounding King's Lynne that would have an effect on their family such as the inclusion of older brothers and sisters income. Many adults felt that in order to be able to afford the rent they would have to ask their older children to find their own places to live. Teens resented that CMJ would do this to their family. To top it all off they did not want to live next door to people who had more money than they did. They felt that bringing people with "money" into the development was only asking for trouble.

Then, youth had strong feelings about King's Lynne. To help them during this transition period social services and CMJ spent a great deal of time and money. A summer program was developed that would be of interest to children from age 2 and up. Trips to Lincoln Amusement Park were staggered through the summer to allow every child the opportunity to go at least once. Smaller trips were held to other points of interest, among the most popular were the WILD radio station visits and the traveling zoo. Recreation equipment was purchased so that youth could borrow it from social services. Volleyball, basketball and baseball became regular pass time sports in the development.

More than anything else the personnel in social services believed in the youth of King's Lynne. The director had buttons printed saying King's Lynne Are Great. Everyone wanted one, youth and adults alike.

Later in the summer social services obtained numerous camperships for youth. For many children this was their first opportunity to attend summer camp. Teens were given summer jobs on-site with funds from the CETA or NYC program. If social services had not found these extra placements for them they would have been unable to work. Social services continued their role by developing programs for other residents. The main building was left open one night a week to allow the men the chance to get together and socialize. Social services purchased coffee and donuts for these sessions.

Sessions were arranged with local agencies to show women how to decorate their home on a budget. Sewing machines were purchased for the use of the tenants to allow them the chance to make items they wanted for their new homes.

Home visits were made by social service personnel when they were alerted to potential problems in the development. They were handled in a manner which made tenants have a great deal of respect for the staff. Information was kept confidential and staff did everything possible to help find a solution to the problem no matter how big or small. One day there was a complaint to management that two female tenants were fighting outside behind their homes. A staff member of social services walked up to their homes to investigate the problem. It seems that the women were arguing about who was going to use the clothes line on that particular day. She simply divided the line in half and gave each woman the chance to do her wash.



## RESIDENTS FEARS

CMJ's takeover had been eagerly anticipated by tenants; yet it was also a moment feared by many tenants. America Park had been something understood, something that the tenants knew. King's Lynne would be new and tenants did not know what to expect. Everyone anticipated that eventually they would have a new home, that there would be new management and new neighbors. But, the ramifications of these items was not yet clearly understood.

Eleanor and Dan Wessell were cognizant of the fact that residents were somewhat uneasy about what was beginning to occur around them. Acting as tenant representatives and general partners they organized staggered trips to view Queen Anne's Gate. It was felt that the trip would reassure tenants, show them what CMJ's other mixed income development looked like to give them some point of reference. Almost every resident took the trip. Most were impressed by the quality of the complex, the beauty of the units and the immaculate care of the grounds.

Residents said nothing but good things about King's Lynne when they came into contact with someone who worked in the development. At the same time there were tenants notifying relocation daily that they wanted to leave. A number of residents with whom I spoke said that they had considered leaving but that the relocation staff had talked them out of it. However, by the number that did leave, it was clear that they could not get everyone to stay. To determine how those families remaining were feeling now that CMJ was laying the foundations at the top of the hill a questionnaire was developed.<sup>16</sup> It was never intended to be used in a formal format. Rather the questions were developed to allow residents the freedom to answer in either expanded or brief answers. Sessions with tenants were open ended, questions about America Park/King's Lynne usually weren't asked until after there had been a

chance to generally chat with residents making both the resident and myself feel at ease with one another. Before any questions were asked the resident told that the purpose of the study was to understand how they felt about both the new and old development. That their feelings were important and that they were the authority on this information tended to make tenants speak freely. It also helped to inform them that never at any time would their name be used when information was released. Rather, whatever anyone said would be added to the comments of others.

The first group of tenants interviewed were those scheduled to make the first move into the new community. It was felt that it would be better to interview according to the timetable for moving to determine if there was a relationship between moving off-site and scheduled date for moving into the new development. Responses from the first group to move were extremely interesting. Of those families in this group everyone insisted that they never thought that the new development would happen. This is understandable when one considers the time involved in the process and the problems encountered over the years. However, most tenants still did not believe that the new development would happen for them while construction was occurring.

"I never thought the new development would happen. I still don't believe it. I'll believe it when we're inside."

Residents seemed particularly concerned about the rules for the new development. A few tenants said that the rules reminded them of a police state, that no one had any right to tell them how to live their lives. Most felt that the rules were unfair but they were not willing to leave because of them. Everyone expressed a fear that their children, who had stated their dislike for the rules, would somehow break them and force their family's eviction.

"I'm afraid if one of my kids does something wrong the cops will knock on my door. Then they will be able to get rid of me."

"It will be hard here at first but only for a little bit. Especially on the kids. They aren't used to being confined."

Parents had a right to be concerned about their children adapting from an environment where there were no restrictions to one that had many. What parents weren't saying is that some of that fear they talked about was not only for their children in the new development but also for themselves. At no time did tenants say they were afraid that they would not be able to adapt, only the children were those who would not be able to make the adjustments.

Residents insisted that no one was informing them of anything that was occurring in the development. They stated that the only things they knew about was the information that was mailed to them. Never did anyone mention any visits or dealings with social services or relocation. This was thought to be strange as everyone in this group had to have meetings with relocation to determine what income slot they would be in and as revealed later, their potential rent, bedroom size, etc. Coffee hours held every Tuesday morning by tenant representatives was mentioned only by one tenant. The information sessions at which I personally saw some of these people also were not mentioned.

"I go to coffee every Tuesday, Next Tuesday we are going to have a look at the hill. If you want to know what's going on you go. If you don't go you don't find out."

"They have made so many changes you really

don't know what is going to happen. Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ tries to tell me but I don't understand and I don't want to bother her. I don't even know when we're going to move."

"...they don't tell you nothing. We don't get that much information. When we ask questions, even ones they think are stupid, they treat you bad. They treat you like your stupid."

It was as though those areas which tenants were uncomfortable with they blocked out of their minds. Asked about the information the tenants were convinced that they had never heard anything.

Discussions around rent were always interesting. A few residents said they did not know what their rent would be. Those that had some idea of what their rent would be felt that it was high not only for previous America Park tenants but also for outsiders. Tenants did not believe that anyone would want to pay high rent to live here. There was little concern that all present tenants would have rent increases. Concern centered around the rent increase of that individual family. Residents examined how much money they presently paid and compare it to their future rent, not remembering that if it had been possible, the Lynn Housing Authority would have increased their rent every year for the past three years. Many tenants held that the new development was going to have unnecessary items, dishwashers, disposals and carpeting were specifically mentioned. No one seemed to remember that at one time they had listed some of these items as being desirable in a new development or if they did recall it must not have occurred to them that they would be required to pay for these luxuries. When it was pointed out that nowhere else in the greater Boston area would they be able to find anything similar for such a low price the tenants were unconcerned. The

fact remained that at that very moment their rent was low. If given a choice at that time on whether or not to go ahead with the new development, I believe that most of this first group would have said no. This would not be due to an increase in rent alone even though the tenants would have said that this was the case.

"It's a waste doing this. These places are nice, they could have been remodeled."

While these tenants were a little hesitant about moving they had an incredible amount of questions to ask about the new development. The most frequently asked focused on units in the new development, what color would they be, what was going to be in the kitchens, when do the outsiders move in, etc. There seemed to be an endless flow of questions from tenants yet they would not ask anyone directly related to the development. Instead there was a grapevine established, that more often than not, released incorrect information. Conversations with other residents became a standard method of releasing tidbits that someone had picked up here and there. No one would admit to tenant representatives, relocation, management or even social services that there were aspects to the new development that they did not understand.

Many of these residents said they were not pleased that King's Lynne was going to become a mixed income development. This fear could be attributed to a fear of the unknown, of what it would be like to live next door to people who did not come from public housing. There was also a fear that the market tenants would be able to identify an America Park tenant. They were aware that there would never be any method established by CMJ or any of their employees to determine who had lived in America Park. Yet they believed that

everyone would be able to distinguish them because of the furniture, automobiles and clothing they owned. Most of these residents had new furniture on lay-a-way for their new homes and still felt that it would not be as nice as their neighbors. One family did think that it would be good to live with market tenants. They felt that the new development would "give poor people a chance to see how higher class people live. We can learn from them. Here it was poor and poorer."

Interviews with residents scheduled to move in later phases were similar to those of the first group. The only noted differences were that those scheduled to move first had more questions about their new homes and those scheduled to move later did not have as many negative feelings about King's Lynne being a mixed income development. Tenants scheduled to move later seemed to remember what America Park had been like as a low income public housing project. A development that would mix different types of people seemed to be desirable to them.

"I think its great that this is going to be mixed income. I always disagreed with low income projects. They should never put all poor people together to live. Spread'em out. How can they be proud of their surroundings living like this. We never had anything either. On the other side of town they had four street cleaners standing around. Police drive by to check things. We never had any of that. Lynn police used to be afraid to come in here. Now if they say go over to the new housing project they get here. But they still won't call it a development. They will, they will."

Many of these residents scheduled to move at later dates had decided that they would wait and see what happend after the first group moved in. Then,

if they found that America Park tenants were having a hard time, they would decide to move. I found this to be strange for at one time many people had really been upset that they had not been chosen to be in the first group to move. Now those in the first group would have given anything to trade places with those moving later.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY PRIDE

CMJ too, realized that there was anxiety on the part of the tenants about moving into a mixed income development. To help tenants it was arranged for the first group to move into their units before any of the outsiders moved on-site. This would allow families to be settled before market families moved in.

When CMJ had almost finished phase one of the new development, model apartments were opened in the mid-rise buildings. Rental agents were brought in to handle the renting of apartments. It was during this period that tenants began to get anxious about moving. Several different dates had been given to them for moving and construction delays had always forced changing the date. Tenant representatives scheduled trips to view the units but they were unable to take everyone who wanted to go. One tenant who had gone took pictures and passed them around for others to view. Suddenly, everyone wanted to go and look at the new units. Tenants tried walking up through both front and rear entrances to view the units but found security guards unwilling to allow them to enter. The social service team explained to the rental agent that it would stop residents from attempting to sneak into the area if it was open sometime for them to view. Arrangements were made to hold a open house for America Park tenants only after the regular hours for viewing the model apartments. Social services provided the

refreshments and on the behalf of the rental agent and CMJ extended written invitations to all of the residents to view the model apartments. The turnout was excellent. Almost every tenant, with the exception of the Hispanic, came at some point during the evening. Youth, who also had never had the opportunity to see just what King's Lynne would look like, also came to view units. The rental agent took everyone, at some point during the evening, on tours of the townhouses although they were not yet completed. Samples of the carpeting had been precut by the agent to allow the tenants to have a sample of what the color would be in their new home. Conversations among tenants that night revealed how the tenants felt about the new units. The apartments were really beautiful. How did anyone make that place so nice? This is the kind of place that we are going to have. We move next you know. When can we move in?

More important than the comments made that evening was the fact that the tenants started to say more positive things about King's Lynne. There was a pride born into the tenants that had never obviously been present before. The fact that the apartments that were being built were for them, and that they were nice seemed to make tenants think differently about the development and about themselves. The adults were not the only residents feeling positive about King's Lynne. Social services held disco dances for youth every Friday night during the summer. In order for any teens to attend that did not live in King's Lynne they had to have a written invitation earlier obtained at the office for them by a King's Lynne youth. The dances were always popular with King's Lynne teens but they also became popular with youth in the Lynn area. Everyone wanted to be invited to King's Lynne. There was even a noted amount of jealousy on



the part of youth from the Curwin Circle development towards the changes that were occurring in the lives of King's Lynne teens. The youth of King's Lynne realized this. The pride that had formed in their parents became just as strong for them. Of course there occasionally were complaints such as the color CMJ had painted the doors in the new development. But there were more times when the boys would hold basketball games against Curwin Circle and the girls would go and scream King's Lynne through the entire game.

Each year the city of Lynn sponsors the National Drum and Bugle Corp Competition. Marching groups come from all over the United States and Canada to perform in the parade. Before the competition there is a parade held with floats entered by various organizations in Lynn. The parade held a special meaning for residents of King's Lynne this summer. For two months youth and women had been meeting to make flowers for the first float ever entered by the King's Lynn community. The float was designed by one of the tenants and social services purchased the equipment for the tenants to make the float. Seventy children signed up to march beside the float during judging. The float was finished in time when the caption was put on it the morning of the parade. Cardboard houses had been made that resembled the units in America Park and King's Lynne. The caption across the float read "We Know Where We Are Going!" Much to the surprise of many, the King's Lynne float won first prize in the competition. The pride of King's Lynne residents was overwhelming. For the first time there had been recognition from the city that was favorable. When residents returned to the development that evening they held a mini parade with the trophy they had won through the development. The cheering and celebrating lasted for a

better part of the night.

The day finally arrived for the first group of King's Lynne residents to move into their new homes. Most families had decided to move themselves so they could use the moving money provided by relocation to purchase additional items for their home. For days after the first families were moved, outsiders were moving in until the entire site was full. Placement of families had been handled to blend the two groups of tenants together. In every roll of townhouses there were two America Park families and two to three market tenants. The same pattern had been established for garden and midrise apartments. Most of the market tenants never realized that they were living next door to someone who had lived in the "worst public housing project in the state." It had been the decision of the rental agent not to inform potential tenants about America Park. Many persons lived at the top of the hill and were never aware of what was at the bottom of the hill. The fear that existed about living next to market tenants seemed to subside when residents became busy in their own homes. Most tenants felt that since their neighbors were not bothering them they weren't as bad as they thought they would be. When residents at the bottom of the hill saw that there were no confrontations between residents on the hill they began to speak more positively about living in a mixed income development. They found that the cars, furniture and clothes of the market tenants were not that different from those they owned. This change in the attitude of residents did not occur until there had been both visual confirmation of the quality of constructed units and confirmation that America Park tenants would live in them. Although most residents had seen drawings of what King's Lynne would look like there was a level of doubt about who

would actually reside in the units.

After Marino was re-elected Mayor the city again seemed to feel that this section of Lynn could be revenue producing for the city. Instead of accepting the proposed Winn project the city opted to build the new junior high school on that site. Community development block grant funds were invested in the Holyoke Park near the development for its revitalization. The LHA decided to put new siding on the units in Curwin Circle. The owner of the dump adjoining King's Lynne property decided to close his facility.

Construction moves on at King's Lynne at an increasing pace. Rental agents have long waiting lists of potential tenants. Applications had come in from several residents of the city who owned homes. They came from residents of Curwin Circle who at one time would have never considered coming across the street. King's Lynn had become known as the most attractive development to live in on the northern shore of Boston. Moreso, it became the fulfillment of a life time dream for some residents of America Park.

## Chapter 5

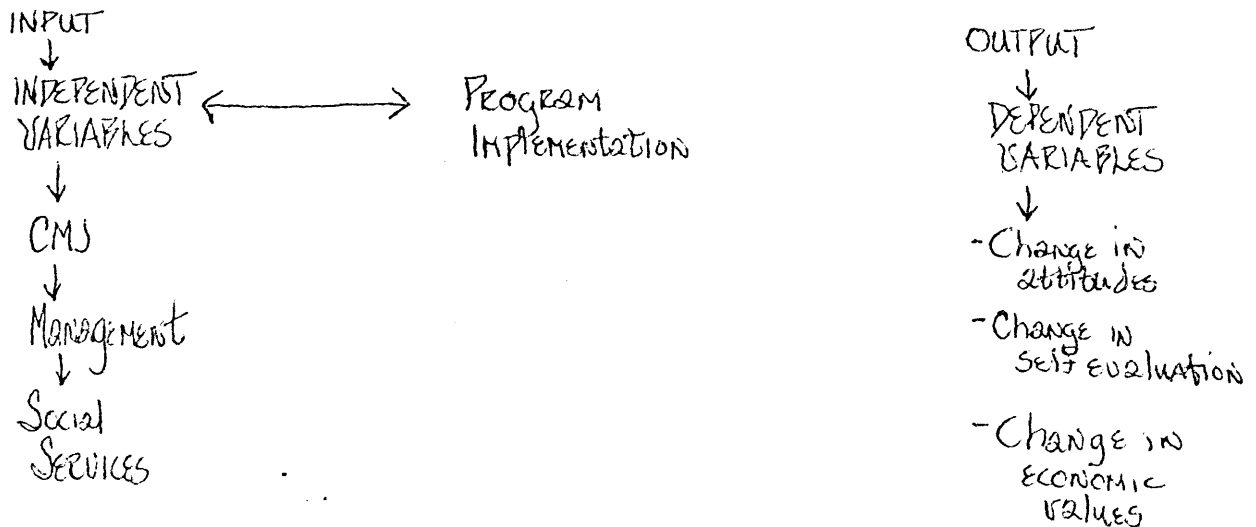
### SYNTHESIS

The King's Lynne development is a social experiment based on a social theory regarding class. The basis for the program design was the belief that the only way to improve the conditions for residents of America Park was to replace the public housing development with a mixed income development; that only when middle income as well as low income people resided in the residential community would it be accepted as an integral part of Lynn. Implicit in the mixed income approach was the view that lower class public housing residents needed middle class "role models" by which to pattern their own lives. It is too early to say whether or not the lives of America Park tenants are permanently "better," that is socially, economically and spiritually, as a consequence of the changed physical and social environment. However, it is possible to examine the social engineering that occurred and determine whether or not it was unique to this experiment or could be duplicated in another such project. It is also possible to examine the areas in which the project has thus far been successful or failed.

#### INTERNAL VALIDITY OF THE EXPERIMENT

In attempting to examine the internal validity of the experiment it is first necessary to note that what is being examined is not what was designed by the APFFC. When committee members began to design a program to solve the America Park problems, they envisioned the development of a mixed income community that would house all of the America Park tenants. They sought the formulation of a community that would not only have new housing but also would provide those essential services lacking in the west Lynn community. Through no fault of the committee what was implemented was not what was designed. The political confrontations encountered forced modifications in the program that could not be anticipated when the APFFC was in the design

stage. However, the implemented program has been acclaimed successful by those involved. It has been credited with provoking the positive changes that occurred in the King's Lynne community and it is believed that it will continue to do so. But, one must be critical when explaining the results that have thus far happened. Was it the program alone that brought changes in the community or were there other plausible explanations? To answer this question it is necessary to briefly review the input variables of the program and judge whether or not they can solely be given credit for the results of the experiment



What we are trying to determine then is whether the dependent variables came about solely because of the independent variables. If CMJ had not been the developer would the same results be obtained? From participant observation which allowed for viewing the actions of CMJ, it is doubted. CMJ is a unique team of developers. They have an understanding not only of what is a profitable development but also of people. Had they not given the attention and consideration to the America Park tenants that they did, the results of the experiment would have greatly varied. CMJ knew what was needed in the community during the period of transition. They provided

exactly what it was, mainly the social service team and funding. They made it obvious that they did in fact care about the tenants of America Park and their future in the King's Lynne development. When alerted to potential problem areas during the transition period, CMJ was always there to assure that they were handled with the greatest of care.

If any other residents had served as tenant representatives the dependent variable would not be what they are. Because the representatives are who they are they have added their character to the program. They have, throughout the implementation stage, been of great value. They demanded that the program be shaped such that tenants were always kept in mind. At no time did they ever take a back seat; they made their presence known throughout the design and implementation of the program. Had any other persons represented the tenants there could never have been the obtained results. Mr. and Mrs. Wessell were remarkable. They learned how to play politics during political confrontations.. They learned the jargon of developers such that they could communicate on an equal level with CMJ. They learned how to read blueprints to speak with contractors. They learned how to take a group of powerless people and develop them into a powerful political threat.

Because management was changed during the program implementation, it is relatively easy to measure the impact it has on the output of the program. The style of the second manager brought about the changes more so than that of the first. Of course, she was not anyone's favorite person on-site. In fact the only people who respected and liked her were CMJ and the partnership. But she knew her role in making King's Lynne work during the period of transition. She had to be hardnose and that's what she was.

The social service team perhaps was the most important in bringing about these results. They were the group whose role was defined in the design of the program as being the tenants support agency through the transition period. They clearly fulfilled their role.

Therefore, it has been established that each input variable was a necessary element in obtaining the dependent variables. What we have not established is whether or not these variables alone brought about the outcome or whether there were other occurrences in the environment that could also explain what happened. During the time of program implementation there was a maturation factor, that is, other factors internal to the experiment changed during the course of the experiment. They too, could have been partially responsible for the outcome. The dropout rate of America Park tenants more than likely is also somewhat responsible for the outcome. Had everyone remained through the course of the experiment, the outcome probably would have shifted. It is safe to say then that even though the independent variable were a necessity there were other non-accounted for factors, that helped bring a change in the community.

#### EXTERNAL VALIDITY

Because of the importance of the America Park/King's Lynne experiment, it is necessary to know if the results thus far obtained could be reproduced in another setting or whether they were unique only to this particular experiment. After examining the occurrences through the life thus far of the experiment, it is doubted that it could ever be reproduced in the same fashion. The King's Lynne experiment too often was based on trial and error. When something came up that had not been accounted for in the design those factors involved would determine what was the best method to handle them. It is impossible to say why one method was used at any one particular

time.

At this point in time it is also difficult to determine whether or not the results obtained were due to the fact that those America Park tenants remaining wanted something positive to happen. They were willing to accept the rules and regulations established for King's Lynne. They were willing to try to make King's Lynne work for their family. For these families the experiment has been successful. However, there were those who the experiment was not a success for. There were those who needed six and seven bedrooms because of their family sizes. There were those who financially could not afford to remain in the development because of the additional amount of money they would be required to pay for rent. There were families that were forced to break apart because of the extra rent that would have to be paid if older children remained at home. For these families the experiment did not work.

King's Lynne is a costly experiment designed to address the issue of troubled public housing. It was designed specifically to address the problems of the America Park development. Had the problems been defined in a different manner the design would have taken on a different form. The problems of America Park were severe; the design was formulated to attack them from both physical and social viewpoints. It is doubtful that the experiment could ever be reproduced again in its present format. This does not mean that the experiment could never again be performed. What it does mean is that if ever performed again the experiment will have to be reshaped to address the problems unique to a particular development. There may not be a need for a no pet clause in another development or management as strict as that in King's Lynne. There may not be a need for a social



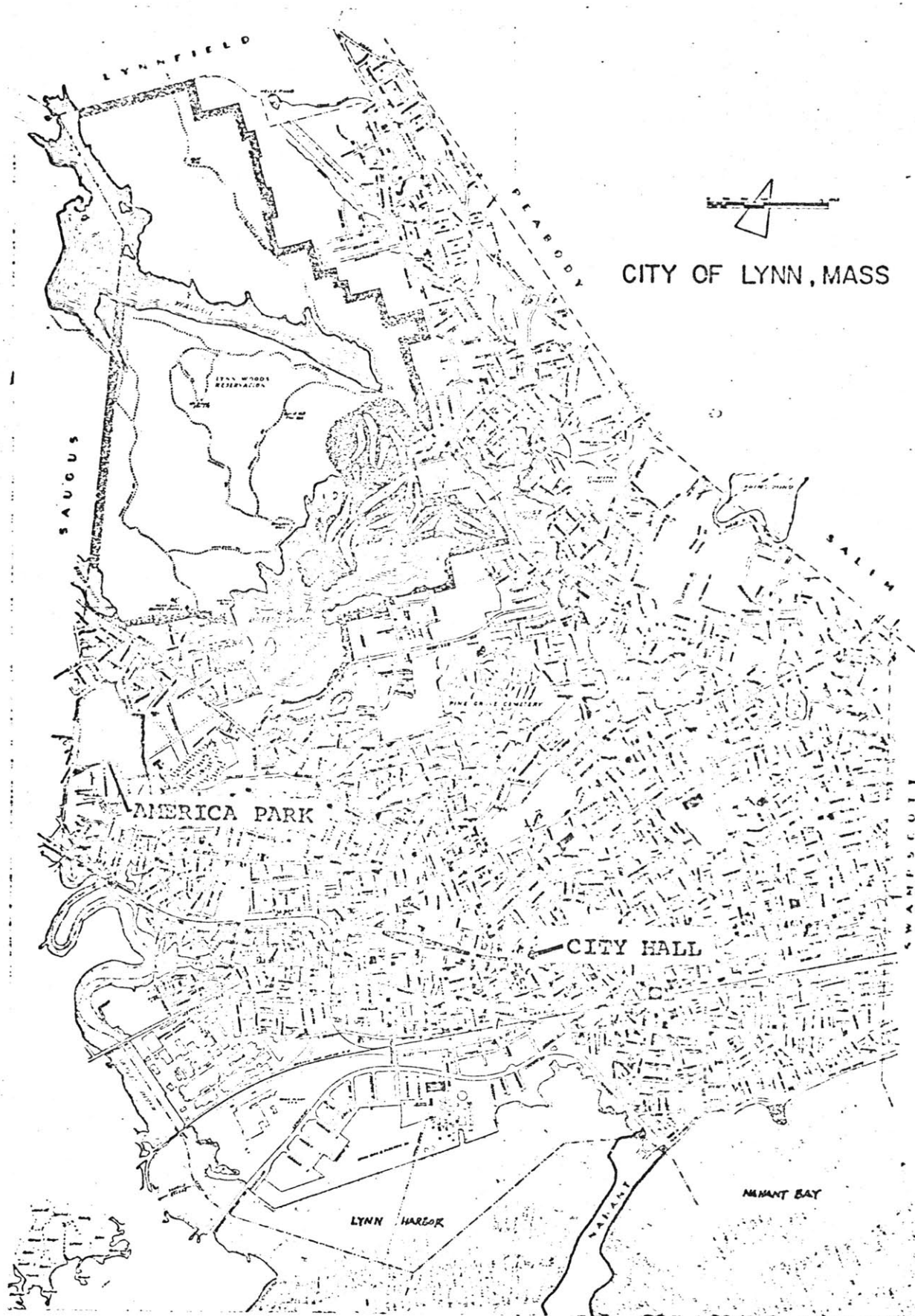
service team such as that used in King's Lynne. However, there now is a foundation for future programs to be designed from. The mistakes and the successes made in King's Lynne can go a long way in redefining how America should shelter her low and moderate income families.

## APPENDIX

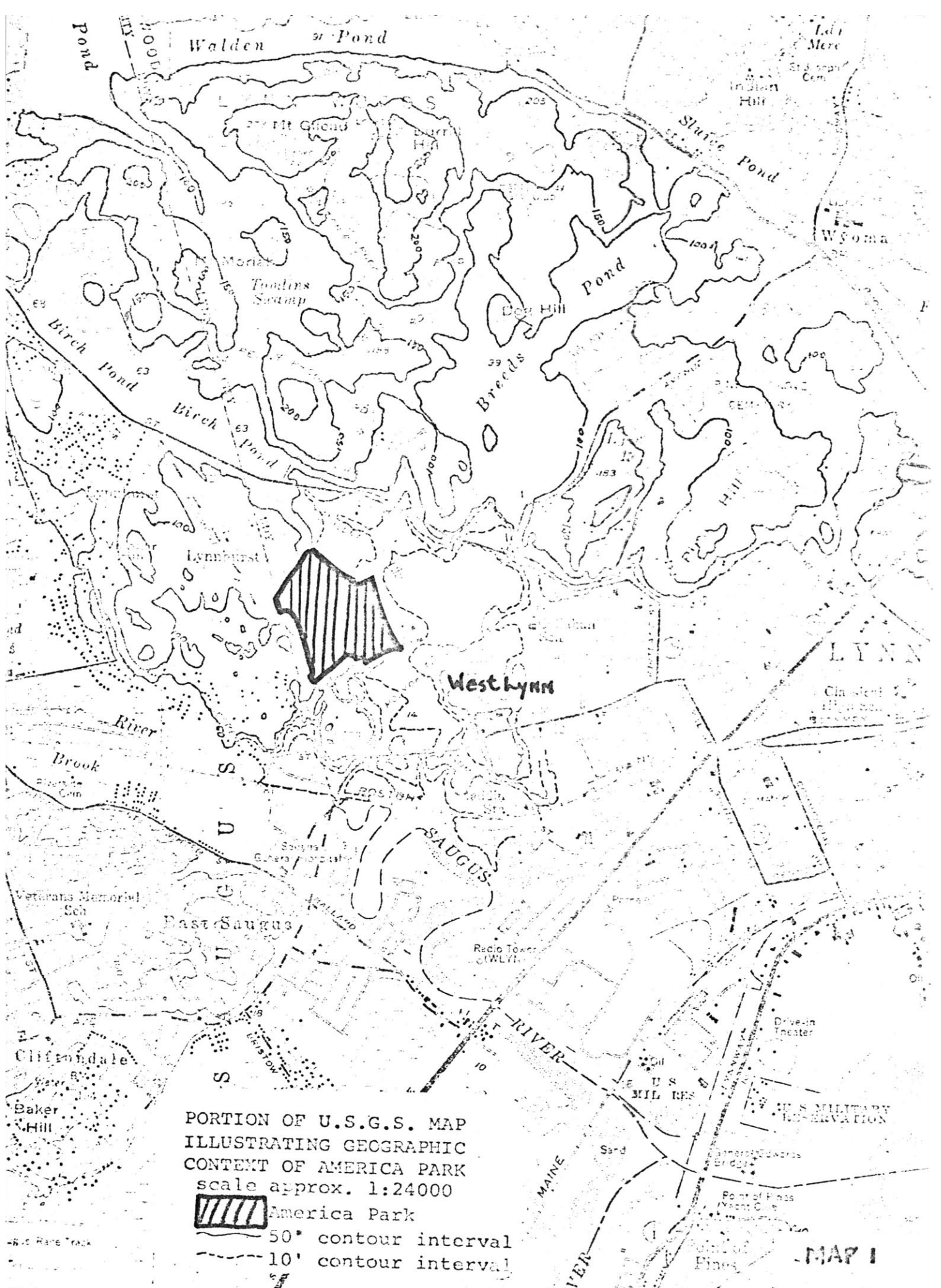
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## A. MAPS

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**Figure 1**  
**CITY OF LYNN, MASS. / LOCATION OF AMERICA PARK**



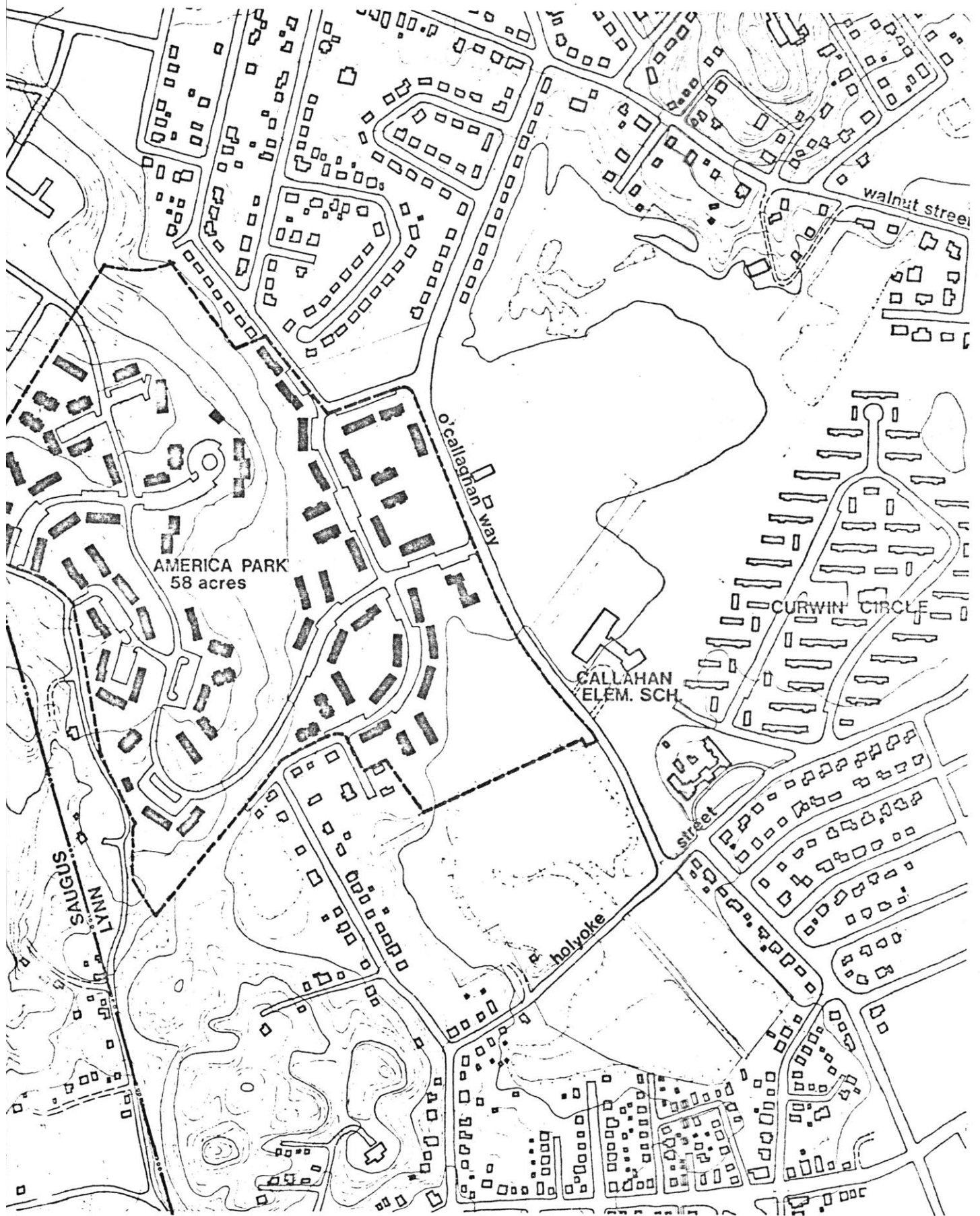
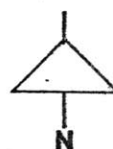
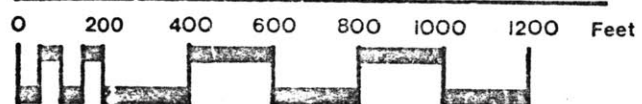


Figure 2  
AMERICA PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA



## B. INTERVIEWS

The following are transcribed from interview sessions held with tenants during the transition period.

This was one of the most interesting sessions I have had..\_\_\_\_\_ was very outspoken and had a tremendous amount of information. \_\_\_\_\_ has lived here since April of 1965. Following is information she gave me.

"I really didn't believe it was just so bad here. The town was so opposed to it. But when DCA started to come down I began to believe." She is getting married and moving to \_\_\_\_\_, otherwise she would stay.

There are many thing that she does not like. "It's not first come, first served. Their friends get things first. There is no representation for the Spanish. Spanish only get the basics. If it was not a must for them to have a black and spanish on the Board, they wouldn't.

The development is nice and I understanding fighting. But its not fair in equalizing things out. It's the people who are running it. Relocation and social service have gone out of the way to help people. The problem is that everybody has their own department. They don't work together. People are grabbing now.

I sat on the Board. I never felt comfortable though. I never really expressed my opinion. When you came in they made it clear how they felt. You didn't want to be the only one voting against them.

KIDS: Social service has really tamed them down. They are showing respect now for the place they live. They really have calmed down. You see kids going to meetings now. They have the right people in that area. With the interest those people show it should continue.

The problem here is not the adults. The families don't have time to follow the kids. People feel good to say that they did something. The kids feel good when they do something.

Before it was very hard here. When the rules and regulations came out people were upset. We fought for new home but we never figured it would be like this. People started to panic. They thought the place was turning into a concentration camp. People are still nervous. Its living near high income people. Its yet to been seen, how high income will react living near welfare families. But, they have weeded out most of the bad families.

We had some bad people and good. We lost them. They never believed something like this would happen.

\_\_\_\_\_ will not go and view the new apartments. "I don't want to see what I lost."

RENTS: Most people here never paid rent. Its good now. Everybody pays but some pay a little late.

I know a lady whose income is too high. They say they are going to fix her rent. If something like this gets out there are going to have problems. It's cliky over there. They can't make exceptions. If you have to pay \$400 a month then pay it. It's stupid to pay \$400 instead of buying. But most people are attached to this place so they will pay whatever they ask.



They may go without food but they will pay.

There is too much talk coming from the office. Everybody tells what they aren't suppose to.

They are good with flyers, pot lucks and things. You can get social service any time. You can get an answer any time. \_\_\_\_\_ is always concerned about people. \_\_\_\_\_ worked hard but she picks. I've seen her cry when she fought. But when the funds ran out she didn't want to do it anymore. If you took the pay away nobody would do it. She has to get off the board but we will see if she still gets her pay.

Living here is like living in one big house with each of us having our own room.

We only have one problem family here. They are Spanish. She drinks too much and so does her boyfriend. She doesn't even take care of her kids. They are a problem now and are sure to be a problem later.

I still get the feeling of not being wanted. Not in social service or relocation. You feel like they know something they aren't telling you. You have to give them credit for what they did.

People here are insulted by the word mandatory. Its mandatory that you come and learn how to use the garbage disposal. They should have just asked you to come and for those who don't show up, go and get them.

Some people have children. They don't feel secure here. You can't stop kids from doing what the do. It sounds like if your child does anything wrong you will be put out. The decision should be made at the time of the offense. If its a kid who does it all the time put them out but if its the first time they should just talk to them. I got all this from people who spend time at the office.

The people here will not ask questions. Its because of fear! I don't think they will be that bad but you don't really know.

There are 7 Spanish families here. They are too jumpy on people. They don't go to you first. They just send out letters. Where there is a language barrier its hard to understand. These are not educated people. They won't ask questions, if they have problems they won't go to the office. People just don't understand. They pick up words here and there. There is a small number of Spanish so they don't need anyone to translate. If we knew there was someone to go to who speaks our language we would be comfortable. But there will never be anymore Spanish or Blacks here. You'll find very few minorities here. The location is beautiful but people can't afford to live here. If a low income person moves out that slot dies. They should keep the low income slots. When its finished they will have all middle and high income. There is only low here now because they have to.

The \_\_\_\_\_ have lived here for 4 years. Lived in Lynn prior to A.P. Have 7 children. \_\_\_\_\_ is stepfather. Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ sits on the Board.

Although she sits on Board she says "I just didn't think the whole thing would be possible." They though about taking reloc money and buying a house. But "we can't find a place big enough for the family that we can afford. We just don't have the money behind us to do that."

Scheduled to move into a 4A. "I feel really good. I went up and saw the apartment and they are really beautiful." Now, planning on making this permanent home "until the kids grow up and move out."

Rules: "I don't know. My kids are normal kids and I don't know how they will react. \_\_\_\_\_ says we have to start being strict with them. It's going to be hard, really hard."

Rents: "I feel they are really reasonable. You couldn't go out and get 4 rooms unheated and pay what I'll pay to to to the top of the hill."

Rules: "Let me remember what was on the lease. Some of them are strict, some are really good."

R.C.: "I have to say they have done a good job since I'm on it."

Info: "Maybe its because I go to the office alot. Then I'm on the Board of Directors and they send letters."

Mixed

Inc: "I don't think the mixed income will work. Maybe its because I've always lived in low income housing. What do the other people think?"

"I hope so. The only way it will work is if people work together, thats new people and old."

"I think maybe people took the opportunity to get the money and buy a house. My husband wanted to but like I told him, what's the sense if your just going to lose the house. He has a seasonal job and sometimes we just don't have money."

"I feel that people will resent me having 7 kids. I didn't get along with my neighbors here because of my kids. Some old people don't like to be around kids and then some people who don't have kids don't like them."

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ at one time worked. He is now disabled. Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ went to work at G.E. They have 8 children, their oldest girl \_\_\_\_\_ just graduated from college and is now working on her Masters. She is the first from both sides of the family to attain an education.

They have lived here for 11 years. They come to A.P. from West Lynn. "I hated it at first but I got use to it."

(Did you think new development would happen?) "Yea, after we did all the protesting. All us poor folks. Now, we got to get out. Should have let them recap these places. We believed we was gonna get a house for reasonable rent. They say for us to "hang on for another month."

(Staying/leaving) "I'm thinking of leaving. Sure am, I'm considering it hard. I can buy my own cheaper than that. Askin' can't my kids help. My kids ain't got nothin to do with it. I go by my income."

Scheduled to move into a 4AT.

"I think it stinks now. I think they are giving poor people the rip off. I was happy bout it at first, not now."

(Staying) "I was planning on it. Not now."

"I really think I'm gonna have to get out. My best bet is to get out while I have my 4,000 down payment."

Rent. "Charge you all this money for rent. They go by the top figure. I have to work all month for rent. I got kids I have to help. I just can't swing it who would pay \$395.00 for a dump like this."

(Rules) "I think it stinks. When you pay rent you should be able to do what you want to."

(R.C.) "They aint' shit. A lot of back biters trying to get for Eleanor and Dan. Had all us walking and protesting in the cold and we ain't got shit. They should have told us right up front. Said it would be 25% of our income, I went in there and now its 35%."

"When this whole thing started it looked good until it came to the dotted line. That's when all the rules started. Want to come in and check on houses. Nobody checks on my house but me. Then it comes out that a lot of these families had to get out. When that man got the land it changed, too. Living rent free for 8 years. That's money in the bank. The next fellow is hungry. He gets ADC and Social Security, she get VA plus they get pay checks. Ain't nothing but a crook. Anybody making over \$200.00 a week don't need welfare. Look how many years they got to save. She's getting her rich sister in here too. Had her sell her house to get in."

"I went to BEANO the other night and \_\_\_\_\_ said it would be about \$257.00. I'm thinking about it but nobody rules me. Once I pay them the rent they don't have anything to say as long as I'm not tearing up anything. Kids can't play in the street, yard or house. That's the only thing I'm considering about."

(Mixed Inc.) "It;s alright with me. Don't make no difference who lives next to me. They got money the look down on me anyway. I don't like white folks anyway."

"If you invite friends over, I got to take them down to the rec center. If my husband wants to paly poker he's gotta to to the rec center."

"If your decent people you keep the place up. We don't need the rules."

"So far what they been doing in the old is good. They should recap these places."

(Will it work?) "I don't think so. I don't think none of the folks will live up to the rules they got. Especially people with kids, they wouldn't stand for it."

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

Man with 8 kids and wife only allowed 11,000 year before middle income. Couldn't afford 25% of income.

"If I had it to do over I'd have them recap. At least you'd have a place to stay. From 75.00 to 395.00 a month. The government should have bought this land and sold houses to us. You know no private man is trying to help poor folks. That man is robbing them blind."

I'm looking for myself. I'm getting the hell out. Rich folks want to tell the poor how to live. I'm going to look for a house. If I'm gonna suffer, I'm gonna suffer for my own. I know I go to pay oil, lights and payments.

"If you got a job forget it. You can't live here. If you on ADC then you are okay."

"If I could live my own life I'd love to stay. The houses are beautiful."

Still unsure but "my mind is dead on a house right now."

As kids get older rent goes up. "I couldn't put my kids out, not to live no place. I can't blame them for going up."

"Every year they renew your lease. After a year that Judy and Madge will be gone. I don't know who they are talking to trying to get me a deal. I'll end up having to pay 395.00. Then I will have lost that \$4,000."

"Come July I receive a 10.00 raise. It wouldn't do me no good. It's suppose to be a cost of living raise and it goies into their pockets."

If I can't find me a decent place to go I just won't work. Let them take rent from my husbands disability.

Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ have lived here for 10 years. Before moving here they had owned their own home. Never at any time did they consider leaving. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ does not want to own a home anymore. He is on a fixed income and does not feel that he can afford the high costs associated with owning a home.

Both like the idea of knocking down existing building and starting afresh. They believe that a different type person will move in. Considered A.P. to be a "rat infested jungle." (Reference to residents) "There are still a few left but they will get them under control."

Family was forced to get rid of their poodle and fish. They understand why this was necessary. "It scoles me to see people still with pets. I don't know why they don't make them get rid of them."

"Some of the people here are just ignorant. Then a lot just claim they don't understand." Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ made reference to the Puerto Rican families being ignorant.

"I think they have to be strict. I'd like to see them stricter. You have to be hard on some of these people."

R. C. (Have they been doing a good job?) "As far as I know. We don't take an active interest. If I'm not actively involved I can't knock anyone who is." Family went to 1 meeting when the state decided to release money for repairs. Said that the people bickered so much nothing was settled. They have attended some of the recent meetings just to hear what is going on. Most of the information they have received comes from phone calls and letters from the office. Spoke of the newsletter that is sent to them. Had knowledge about Tuesday coffee sessions, trips to see the new units, procedures for complaints, etc. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ did question me about what was going on up there on the hill. At one time he used to walk his dog or take his children to watch the progress on the hill. "I used to know every move they made." Since the gate has been installed he no longer knows what progress has been made. However, he purchased a police radio and monitors calls for K.L.

He and his wife are building captains. They watch the empty unit next door to them for vandalism. Have often caught kids in the apartment and chased them out. On the last occasion when Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ caught a neighbors 17 year old son attempting to gain entry she was shot with a BB gun. They are now involved in a court battle around this.

As far as this becoming a mixed income Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ says, "Great! I always disagreed with low income projects. They should never put all poor people together to live. Spread'em out. How can they be proud of their surroundings living like this. We never would get anything either. On the other side of town they had 4 street cleaners standing around. Police drive by to check things. We never had any of that. Lynn police used to be afraid to come in here. Now if they get a call they say go over to the new housing project. They still won't call it a development."

The only thing I don't like is not being able to have cookouts in your backyard.

"As long as they keep thumbs down on things and stick to them it will work."

Why did so many leave? "The pressure, the stigma attached to living here. You could never bring your kids up the way you want to."

"As long as I can remember backwards and never expect too much, this will be a nice place to live."

\_\_\_\_\_ has lived here for 4 years. Female headed household, has 6 children all under age 7. Grew up in Lynn so when looking for a place to live this seemed natural.

Did you think this would happen? "No, I thought they would let it sit until it finally went down. I thought the people who lived around here would make a big shopping center."

She decided to stay because of her 6 kids. "The best bet was to stay. Where else could I go with 6 kids."

She considered leaving at one time. Believes that many left because of the rules. "Maybe they didn't believe it would happen. I really didn't believe they would let us stay. You know, people used to call each other and say that they wouldn't let us stay. They got out while they could." Now planning on making this her permanent home.

How do you feel about the new development? "It's gonna be okay. Some of the rules are tight."

Rents - "I think it's great for me. I like the electricity included."

Rules - "Because it's privately owned it's going to be hard to follow." (Reference to 3 day visitor rule) "As long as you say rent you shouldn't have to report in. I guess they have to so some people wouldn't be bad."

Info - "They send out flyers, sometimes they call me and ask me to come over. They have meetings all the time but with the kids I can't go."

Mixed Income - "I think it's okay. I would have it all low income. You know people in the area might not want us in here. I still don't think they do."

Services - "That's wonderful. It's nice. It will give the kids something to do."

Will it work? "I hope so. It would be nice if more low income could move in."

We briefly talked about what the new development would have in it. She said, "I'm not gonna know how to act. I like having a yard. I always wished I had a fenced-in yard."

Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ is troubled about not knowing any one in the new development. Says she is glad that the lady over there will live near her. Their kids like each other and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ is nice.

Still seems very unsure of self and prospects of moving.

\_\_\_\_\_ has lived here for 14 years. Prior to moving here she lived in a 3 family home in Somerville. Described the area as a middle and high income neighborhood. No low income lived there.

She knew that the new development would happen. "I didn't know how long it would take." \_\_\_\_\_ decided to stay because "I could afford to live here and besides I like it here." Says she always had a nice apartment. Even if the new development didn't happen she would stay. With LHA she had no problems. Maintenance crew knew her and that she only called if it was something she could not repair herself. LHA had a cre on site but had backlog for months. None of the workers lived in the development although many lived around it.

\_\_\_\_\_ is scheduled to move into a 3T. Has 3 daughters, 17, 18, and 19. Because of their age her rent can increase if they become employed. "If the rent goes up then it goes up. The kids will stay with me. No way am I gonna push my kids out the door."

Excited about new development. "Can't wait to get up there. There are not enough hours of the day to do what I want to." (Reference to making drapes) "I'm glad they are cutting down on C.B. radios. It ruins your T.V. reception."

Planning on making this her permanent home until she remarries. Boyfriend owns a home.

"It will be a better life for the children. I put my kids before the dogs. I lvoed my dogs but they had to go. I think it will be good. The kids have natural fears. Any place you live there are rules and regulations you have to live by. The rules here are the same as they were before only now they are enforcing them."

Rent - "Actually the rents are fair. Where can I go and pay 156.00 for all these luxuries. It's a big jump from 46.00 a month. The people here have known all along that the rent would go up. Mine went up because I went to work. For 2 years they have known the rent would go up. They should have saved their money."

Knowledge of rules - "They lied. At every one of the meetings these things were hased over. Before signing the leases \_\_\_\_\_ made us all read the rules."

Mixed Income - "They are wrong, very wrong. Nobody knows who is low. For Christ sake, you don't have to let anybody in your house."

Info - Came from attending meetings, flyers.

Mixed Income - "I have no problem with it. As long as I have enough in my house, I'm fine. Hell, those people probably worked for what they have.

Choice of new tenants - Do you want to see anyone from Hells Angels? Want to see new people? "You can't have change for the better without new people. Not to say we haven't changed by ourselves. We've come a long way."

Tenants leaving - "Because of that 4,000.00 The promise of money."

Will it work - "I sure hope so. The only reservations I have are personal. You know my financial status. I know when you have a subsidy if you get a pay raise your rent increases. It would be nice if I could keep it for awhile."

"As long as you have a subsidy that's a problem"

"If you want to better yourself you have to make sacrifices. To me, it's all pluses."

"I'm gonna love it!"

\_\_\_\_\_ has lived here for 5 years. Prior to moving here she lived in Lynn all of her life. Like many others she did not believe the new development would. But she likes it here as it is now. "It's quiet and peaceful here. My family didn't want me to come here. I don't bother my neighbors and they don't bother me."

Reason for staying: "For one thing the rent is cheap. I couldn't afford a house on the outside. I like it here." She never considered moving.

Scheduled to move into a 2 bedroom Garden. Has 17 year old son who no longer goes to school. Says that Social Services tried to keep him in school.

Planning on remaining here permanently. "I'm getting too old to buy anything else. Besides, my kids are all leaving home. I'm just dying to move. I'm waiting for the gardens to be finished." Wants to be on second floor for privacy. "I think everyting will be a lot better."

At this time she does not know what her rent will be. Waiting for relocation to receive "clearance on my checks."

Rules - "I think rules are good. People can't just go and do what they want."

R. C. - "Yea they are good. They are two good people. I go over there and tell them if I have problems and then somebody come to fix it."

Infor - "little flyers, they stick them through the mail box."

Mixed Income - "Its no different then it is now. The only thing is one will pay more rent than the other. We all get different amounts of money." (She explained this by pointing out that her neighbor get AFDC once a month and she gets Social Security every two weeks.)

Social Services - "I think it will be like it is now the basketball is all black. The swimming pool will be the same. That's why my son won't so. He doesn't like to mix." (She further stated that she has encouraged him to request s.s. to allow his band to practice in the basement here. Has not done this.)



"I think it will if the people get together and work. It has to be a project where everybody works."

Moves - "I don't really know. I think it's stupid for people to give up a new house for an animal."

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

February 15th animal deadline. Many people still have dogs and cats.

Buying a new dining room table and hutch. "I've always wanted a hutch and now I'll finally get one."

\_\_\_\_\_ is black and originally from the south. Came to Lynn years ago for employment in shoe factories. \_\_\_\_\_ can neither read or write. Sits on the Board.

\_\_\_\_\_ has lived here for 5 years. Prior to A.P. she lived in Lynn.

Why did you remain? "Now you listen and listen good. I'm gonna tell you like it is. I didn't have nowhere else to go. When I came, I came to stay. I got to have someplace for the boy and me to stay."

Remaining? - "Until they kick me out. That's what they gonna have to do. I gots me a guarantee to live here. It's good too. Any police or judge will say so."

Scheduled to move into a 2 bedroom T. - "It's gonna be nice."

Rent - "Can't say nothing about it till Madge gets the papers back."

Rules - "Nice, good they need it here. What you tear up you pay for."

R.C. - "I don't know what they want them to do. I don't care what other folks think but I think they have done a good job. Been fighting ever since I'd know'em."

Info - "I go to the meetings. Atkins been fighting for 8 years. I go to meeting with Eleanor and them. Never keep me out. I tell them I come back later and they say you come on in her and sit. I went with Atkins to Boston. Had meetings in this town. We went, we all went. Atkins, she tell us before we go in not to say nothing no matter what happens. Those rich white women, they called us pigs, cows and horses, you hear me! Pigs, cows and horses. But we sat and didn't say nothin. Atkins she sat here with tears coming out her eyes."

"We went on that trip to see the other place. Atkins called up those white women and asked them to go. Had a free bus an nice food. Called up one group and they said no. She hung her head down and shoot it. But she tried again. They said no. All them women said no."

Mixed Income - "I think it be good. One on one street one on another."

S. S. - "I think its nice."

Work? - "I do, I do. I think its gonna be good."

Leaves - "You listen good. They was fools. A little money in the air and they took it. Didn't last'em two day neither. My cousin she lived over here. Took the money, she did and E and D begged her to stay. Moved into a dump. That money was gone in two days. Fool, she was a fool."

"Some of these people owed housing 8-900.00 for rent. E and D got all that wiped out. They owes it again. I don't know what's wrong with 'em You got to live and you got to pay rent somewheres. Mine as well pay it here. Anytime I gets me some extra money I take it over there for rent. Won BEANO the other night, 500.00. I took it to pay rent. Dan, he told me to keep it. I'm so far ahead. He told me to wait till I moved into the new place."

"People don't know how to act when they get a little something."

Dogs - "I told, I did. Lady down there has a dog. Told on her, too. That woman hasn't done nothin about it. I told Dan and he said not to tell no more. Already told her about 8 times."

"I like to sit outside and see the police come. They come in a marked car and a plain one."

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, Lynn Monograph, (Boston, 1974). All statistical information following in the introduction comes from the same source.
- 2 Lynn Planning Board, Report on A Planning Program For Lynn, Massachusetts, (Cambridge, 1961), p. 9
- 3 Stern, Earle, "America Park: Cancerous Blight Project Demolition Sought;" Daily Evening Item, Lynn, Massachusetts, August 9, 1973, p. 1
- 4 ibid., September k, 1972
- 5 ibid.
- 6 ibid.
- 7 APFFC, Pamphlet prepared on State Legislation.
- 8 Policy group, Redevelopment of America Park Lynn, Massachusetts for mixed income housing, (Lynn, 1974) p. 3
- 9 Tagalakis, Jim, "Dateline: City Hall," Daily Evening Item, Lynn, Massachusetts, April 8, 1974.
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_, "Rehabilitate America Park?" Daily Evening Item, Lynn, Massachusetts, August 7, 1975

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- "Public housing to stay at America Park." Daily Evening Item. Lynn, Mass., September 12, 1975
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